

PHILOSOPHICAL RHAPSODIES.

F R A G M E N T S

OF

AKBUR OF BETLIS.

CONTAINING

R E F L E C T I O N S

ON THE

LAWS, MANNERS, CUSTOMS and RELIGIONS,

OF CERTAIN

ASIATIC, AFRIC, and EUROPEAN NATIONS.

COLLECTED AND NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.

By RICHARD JOSEPH SULLIVAN, Esq.

Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica Veritas.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

V O L. III.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR T. BECKET, PALL-MALL, BOOKSELLER TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES, AND
THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES THE PRINCES.

M,DCC.LXXXV.

PHILOSOPHICAL RHAPSODIES

FOR A G M E N T S

ARTS OF LETTERS

REFLECTIONS

ON MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND RELIGION

AS APPEARING IN EUROPEAN WRITERS

CHIEFLY TO THE NEW SPANISH EMPIRE

BY RICHARD JOSEPH SULLIVAN, ESQ.

Author of "The History of the Spanish Language," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. BARNES, FINE-ARTS, BOOKSELLER TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF WATTS, AND
THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES THE DUCHESSES
MDCCLXXXV.



Philosophical Rhapsodies.

FRAGMENT LXXXIII.

IN due order of succeſſion, the Greeks muſt next make their appearance: a people unqueſtionably entitled to a place in antiquity, but a place of an inferior ſtation to either the Egyptians or Phœnicians, whoſe pupils they confeſs themſelves to have been. The arts, peculiar to their ſoil, were few; and for thoſe few, and which ſucceeding ages ſaw them bring to

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B

ſuch

such wonderful perfection, they were indebted to Asia and Africa. The colonies of Egypt and Phœnicia found Greece immersed in ignorance and barbarism; they had warriors and they had heroes; but what were those warriors and heroes? Men stained with inglorious blood, ruffians, and assassins. The ancient Greeks, however they may have been admired, were an uninstructed and uncivilised race; nor were their boasted leaders, their demigods, any other than chiefs of wandering plunderers: sheep-stealing, and similar trespasses, being the causes of their most celebrated contests.

What cause have I to war at thy decree?
 The distant Trojans never injur'd me:
 To Phthia's realms no hostile troops they led,
 Safe in her vales my warlike couriers fed.

ILIAD, b. i. v. 199.

Says Achilles to Agamemnon in the Iliad. Had depredations been committed on his oxen or horses, his language, as he gives you to understand, would have been



been different ; but what positively proves the Greeks to have been no better than robbers by profession, at the time we are speaking of, was their addiction to piracy. Their most august monarchs were of the number of those who, without provocation, committed hostilities indiscriminately on friend and foe. Mark the time when Menelæus, the sovereign of a renowned people, and the husband of the all-beauteous Helen, was employed in exploits of that nature; and the feats that he accomplished. Priding himself in the recollection of those heroic deeds, and addressing himself to Pisistratus and Telemachus, he says,

For eight slow circling years, by tempests tost,
From Cyprus to the far Phœnician coast,
(Sidon the capital) I stretch'd my toil
Thro' regions fatten'd with the flow of Nile.

My wars, the copious theme of ev'ry tongue,
To you, your fathers have recorded long :
How fav'ring Heav'n repaid my glorious toils
With a sack'd palace and barbarian spoils.

ODYSSEY, B. IV. v. 97.

Nor did this pyratrical disposition cease from being characteristical of the Grecians, as long as they remained an independent people. "My endeavours to extend the dominions of Athens (the oath of a military man) shall never cease, while there are wheat, barley, vineyards, and olive-trees, without its limits." This comprehensive denunciation of depredation against all other nations, civilized or uncivilized, proves ultimately to have been the cause why Greece could send forth such hosts of brave and experienced soldiers; but, at the same time, it manifests the state of depravity into which she must then have been plunged.

While ignorance and barbarism hold possession of a people, the social virtues sink under the weight of brutality and force: it is then that the horrors of strife exhibit themselves in their most atrocious and most sanguinary form. War, even
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in the most favourable point of view, cannot be otherwise considered than as the child of hard necessity, malice, or injustice ; but when springing among licentious and unconnected bodies of unprincipled barbarians, it shews itself in all the violence of ferocity and murder ; no ties are then attended to. Desolation, misery, and destruction, are the inevitable consequences of opposition ; it even stifles those general feelings of compassion which every human breast on earth partakes of in some degree or other. How dreadful the words of Agamemnon to Menelæus, who, with a lifted dart, stood suspended over a Trojan, compassion pleading for the fallen warrior's youth !

—— Oh impotent of mind !
Not one of all the race, nor sex, nor age,
Shall save a Trojan from our boundless rage :
Ilion shall perish whole, and bury all ;
Her babes, her infants at the breast, shall fall,
A dreadful lesson !

ILIAD, b. vi. v. 71.

B 3

And

And yet this was the wise, the generous Agamemnon;—the chosen leader of the armies of the Greeks!

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXXXIV.

FEW arts were native to the soil of Greece. The Grecians could not boast of much invention: they improved, indeed, on what was communicated to them, and what they wanted in genius, they made up in perseverance; not but that the Greeks might, in time, have been equally celebrated with either the Egyptians or the Phoenicians. But their society was comparatively infantine to either of the latter; and that period of imbecility is unfavourable to great exertion, however the seeds may then be scattered, which, in the end, are destined to exhibit the genius and ability of a nation.

The peninsula of Greece was divided into many different states, and each pre-

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sented a peculiar character. Sparta and Athens were of the greatest degree of eminence: the first, rigid and austere, averse from all the comforts and all the pleasures of sense; devoted to both active and passive resolution, and proud, inasmuch, as they banished every enjoyment from their society. The Athenians, on the other hand, lively and ingenious; fond of the refinements and luxuries of life, brave and patriotic, but vain-glorious and self-sufficient. “And shall not Philip
“and his actions,” said Demosthenes, at the most cultivated period of Athenian refinement, raise the like indignation? He
“who is not only no Greek, no way allied
“to Greece, but sprung from a part of the
“barbarian world, unworthy to be named!
“a vile Macedonian, where, formerly,
“we could not find a slave fit to purchase.” But Sparta and Athens did not give the stamp to the Grecian character;

rafter ; each republic had its peculiar and strongly-marked features. All, however, were arrogant and assuming, proud of themselves, and contemptuous of others ; and how little they merited that prodigious supremacy, is glaringly to be traced in the pages of their history. But let us take a glance at them in the first period of their story : conceive them all, as it were, assembled on the plains of Troy, each body of vassals headed by its chieftain. Look at the heroes there for a moment ; fancy yourself at one of their entertainments ; good heavens ! how savage and brutal do they appear ! Sovereigns and generals intermix on the open plain ; bulls and rams are laid low by their mighty hands ; skins are flead off, bowels and intrails torn out ; and then, to crown all, the royal warriors transfix, broil the parts, and devour them with a canine voraciousness.

A steer for sacrifice the King design'd,
 Of full five years, and of the nobler kind.
 The victim falls; they strip the smoking hide,
 The beast they quarter, and the joints divide;
 Then spread the tables, the repast prepare,
 Each takes his seat, and each receives his share.
 The King himself (an honorary sign)
 Before great Ajax plac'd the mighty chine.

ILIAD.

Nor were the Greeks remarkable for emerging quickly from their barbarism and ignorance: it was not until the year 1493, before Christ, that they began to write; and then they fell into all the absurdities of their masters, the Egyptians and the Phœnicians. The tales of hyperbole and superstition they greedily imbibed. Every rude and unfashioned doctrine became a favourite object of their belief; their credulity was unbounded; and yet, it must be confessed, wisdom and instruction had their rise in that very credulity; for fabulous as their history and mythology undoubtedly were,

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the sweet and harmonious numbers in which they were afterwards handed down, imperceptibly fascinated mankind, and led them to studious investigation. Of their golden age, indeed, I have but little idea : we must conceive it to have been poetical ; and fiction we know to be the soul of poetry.

These were the subjects of old Saturn's reign :
 Like gods they liv'd, with bosoms void of care,
 To toil and pain estrang'd : cold age ne'er shook
 Their vigorous limbs ; but in eternal feast
 They pass'd the joyous time : then full of days,
 As if o'ercome by gentle sleep, they dy'd.
 In life each good was theirs ; the fruitful earth
 Spontaneous pour'd perpetual harvest round ;
 Which in glad ease they quietly enjoy'd.
 And when descending to the grave, in dust
 They shrouded lay, their souls by Jove's high will
 Were guardian Genii made ; in airy forms
 To wander earth, and bless the kindred just ;
 Unseen, observing every deed of man
 Of wealth, and bless th' awarers here below.

Can it be believed that Hesiod sung
 thus sweetly to the Grecians of the reign
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of Saturn; and that the same people should, for so many ages afterwards, continue in ignorance and barbarism? This is, indeed, the representation of a golden age; and whether Saturn's or Noah's, as hath been conjectured, or any other's, as the Greeks received the tradition of it, and believed it orthodox, they would not have departed, one would suppose, from the social system it held out. But the Greeks, or the greatest portion of them, were in every period of their history, and in this as probably as in any other, men more of words and imagination than of judgement and proper discrimination. By their poetical compositions, their oratory, and their historical details, as I have just said, they had, in their advanced age, the happy talent of veiling their defects; and in an equal ratio of holding out their commendable qualifications, in brilliant, though it

is pardonable to conjecture them, exaggerated colours*.

I do not presume to call in question, much less to arraign, the abilities of those sages, on whom they bestowed the flattering appellation of philosophers or lovers of wisdom; they were unquestionably great and most respectable characters. The names of Thales, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, besides many others, must be ever held in the highest veneration; but these were men of speculation, men of words, who disputed, and who wrote in their porticoes and schools. The bulk of the people, or rather the national dis-

* It has been remarked by an eminent critic, that the ancient epic poets were very unskilful teachers of virtue. That the reader might rise from their works with a greater degree of active and passive fortitude, and sometimes of prudence; but that he would be able to carry away few precepts of justice, and none of mercy.

position,

position, is what we are to consider. Academies, and other seminaries of learning, will ever produce subtle and nice disquisitions on abstracted subjects. Governments, manners, and customs, are essentially different; they are to be judged of only in the rough. While the philosophers, therefore, are at rest upon the shelves, we shall content ourselves with the humbler investigation. We shall touch but lightly even on the arts and sciences of the Greeks, of which they were so proud; but excepting architecture, sculpture, painting, and engraving, they had not much to boast of. Science was at a very low ebb among them, especially that of the sublime and demonstrative kind.

FRAGMENT LXXXV.

WHAT I have just said must be taken in a comparative point of view, with the scientific knowledge of the present times; a mode, by the way, not very impartial, when we reflect on our being ourselves indebted to Greece for our first acquaintance with the arts and sciences; and particularly when we take into the account the very many centuries the ingenuity of man has had to work upon their foundations. The immense noise, the very eager and bigoted curiosity which hath been excited by this nation of nations, together with the super-eminent reputation which hath been given to them, makes me, perhaps, when disappointed in my researches, unjust and uncandid to the
Greeks.

Greeks. I should be sorry to find it so; but whatever I may detract from the very exalted character they hold, can be of little consequence. Fixed on a broad and firm basis, the puny opinion of an individual can neither shake nor endanger it. It is far beyond an insignificant, and an unlearned man.

It is said the glory of a nation is not always to be measured by the number of its people, or the extent of its provinces: the observation is just. Ancient and modern history affords various instances in proof of it; but not one more conspicuously than Athens. We have already remarked that the Athenians were lively and ingenious, brave, and patriotic: added to this, they were addicted to the study of all that they supposed useful, and all that was elegant in the pursuits of life. From those dispositions arose that renown which they acquired for their vast extent
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of knowledge; from those dispositions came that distinguishing and compendious eulogy on their city, "Athens, the
 "favoured seat of politeness and of learning;" and in reality it deserved it. Rome, we know, when in her highest glory, sent thither her sons to study philosophy, oratory, and jurisprudence.

One trait of this people shews a remarkable, if not a practicable, attention to those duties which, exciting respect, fix a reputation, and establish the principles of order and good government. The law of the land prescribed a previous examination before certain judges, of the past conduct and disposition of every candidate for public employment; it being an ordinance, "That whoever had lived a vicious and
 "a scandalous life, should be deemed unworthy of even the meanest office of the
 "State." This was certainly a wiser mode than the trial after death by the

Egyptians; for it had the immediate and happy effect of the prevention of abuse; and as an example, it assuredly had the advantage of speaking more feelingly to the senses. That a regulation of this nature could not have been faithfully or rigidly carried into execution, is beyond a doubt; no society ever was, nor ever will be, virtuous enough to steer itself by so immaculate a rule of conduct. Abilities, valour, birth, fortune, with various other adventitious circumstances, will always have a preponderating weight in public transactions; but still the ordinance was a commendable one. It held out a wholesome check *in terrorem*; it spoke to the youth who aspired to honours, “gain reputation in a private life, “and by that means open your way to “distinction in the public departments to “which your duty and ambition lead “you:” but this was Athenian discipline. What a contrast to that of Sparta!

How

How strange and incomprehensible it is, that the human mind, in a refined society, forgetful of the blessings it derives from that refinement, should yet, soberly, set to work to deck out with praise, the savage and comfortless children of Lacedemon; and yet how many books have been written on the subject. A set of people who could be proud only that they enjoyed nothing, who aimed at greatness, but who mistook the road, the road at least calculated for beings possessed of rational propensities; and yet these were the statesmen, these were the legislators who have since been held up to us for imitation. What a mockery of sense, what an insult of morality, of every virtue, public and domestic! The grand and principal object of Lycurgus's system was, that every individual, regardless of himself, should be implicitly devoted to the State; and so far he, perhaps, was right. But, to accomplish this, was there

a necessity that the individual should be debarred of every gratification congenial to the heart of man? Could not a tender husband, a fond father, having, at the same time, all the additional ties of family and friends, be in every respect as solicitous, and as eager for the independency of his country, as the poor miserable wretch who had no home, no attachments, but those prescribed to him by compulsion and restraint? Who can say that the Spartans, by forbearance, acted agreeably either to the dictates of nature or of reason? Spartans, as well as others, were ordained by heaven to consult their will. No nation, like them, was ever cursed by Providence with a degradation lower than that of the veriest brutes of the creation; patience is absolutely lost when this subject comes to be considered. But let us attend a Spartan for a moment: from his birth (the dreadful examination which adjudged him either life or death
being

being gone through) he is considered as the child of the State; as the child of the State he is educated; but what kind of education does he receive? No professional robber ever went through half the training to infamous practices; dexterous thieving and hardiness are the corner stones of his ability: on these he is to rear his honours and future reputation. Not a bit of food does he eat, until he steals it from one person or another; nay, should he be detected, and pinching hunger be the consequence, he is, in addition, despised for his deficiency in skill, and cruelly flogged for his negligence and inattention. Thus he goes on until he is admitted to man's estate. Here, as before, the State takes him by the hand; no solicitude is to be felt for separate property or fortune. A public table is found for him and all his fellow citizens; nay, should he even have a family

mily, his children are not his, they are the wards and pupils of the nation. But even in this how dreadfully is he restrained, he cannot marry when and whom he likes; neither, when married, can he see his wife when he chuses, or abide with her long, as his affections might prompt him; but what is still more shocking, should he unhappily be childless, it is a sort of duty owing by him to the State, to lend the partner of his bosom to the embraces of another man. What, what can be said of a people regulated by such laws? Can we withhold from them the epithet, comfortless savages? What a picture of society! Divested of every enjoyment; inured to ferocity and fraud; and debarred from every feeling of sensibility and tenderness. Even the gentler sex are forced from their natural dispositions, and, in conformity with the customs of their country,

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are obliged to give into the most humiliating excesses of barbarous indelicacy.

During the first Messenian war, the Lacedemonians having bound themselves, by oath, not to return to Sparta until their hostile purposes should be accomplished, the women were alarmed, and deputed some of their numbers to recommend to the army a regard to posterity, which would inevitably fail, should the men continue obstinate and not return to the city; upon which a corps of volunteers, consisting of fifty of the likeliest young fellows, was detached from the army, and their orders were positive to cohabit, indiscriminately, with all the women of the place. The story says, the orders were obeyed.

FRAGMENT LXXXVI.

HISTORIANS are divided about the country whence the Greeks derived their religion. Some say it was from Egypt; others will have it from Thrace; but it is impossible to ascertain which, and for this very simple reason, that every city, village, and hamlet, of the whole Peninsula, had peculiar and distinct divinities of its own. The Egyptians and the Thracians, therefore, together with the Phœnicians and the Syrians, may severally be supposed to have contributed assistance to that whimsical edifice, reared by the Greeks into a system of religion, in which sacred groves, altars, and consecrated streams, suited the poet's admiration; while temples, sacrifices, and processions, fully

fully answered the purposes of the soldier, the legislator, and the priest.

Their veneration for all the exterior of religion was certainly great: no people ever attended to it with more zeal and regularity; but the multitude of their deities was astonishing. No wood, mountain, vale, or field, but had an edifice to some tutelary god: rivers too came in for their portion of adoration; nor were hills and fountains forgotten. In their sacrifices also they were punctual, still adhering to the rooted prejudice of sacrificing on hills, as the places nearest to the residence of the gods; nor did they leave out penances or religious vows. The men were seen to clamber on their knees to the temples, and the women to sweep the pavements with their hair.

From what is to be collected from the annals of the Greeks, and in particular
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from their systems of mythology, it is readily to be perceived, that the more enlightened amongst them considered the whole body of their divinity as nothing more than a wise and wholesome aggregate of solemn regulations instituted by man, with a view to the attainment of earthly happiness. Each religion, they supposed, possessed of those peculiar qualities which suited it to the immediate society of its own particular state, as well as to the more general ones which served to strengthen the ties that linked distinct communities with each other. They admitted of no exclusive favour from heaven. Man to the gods was the same every where; nay, so far did they carry this praise-worthy idea, that they not only offered up adoration to the deities of a foreign country, when in that country, but they even prayed to the guardian divinities of their enemies, as was instanced by them at the siege of Troy. There
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are many passages in the Greek writers, which take notice of this liberality of religious sentiment. None, however, at present, occurs to me more striking than the supplication of Ulysses, when shipwrecked on the coast of Phœacia, addressing himself to the river :

Whoe'er thou art, before whose stream unknown
I bend, a suppliant, at thy wat'ry throne,
Hear, azure king! nor let me fly in vain
To thee from Neptune, and the raging main.
Heav'n hears and pities hopeless men like me,
For sacred ev'n to gods is misery :
Let then thy waters give the weary rest,
And save a suppliant, and a man distressed.

ODYSSEY, b. v. v. 568.

This kind of disposition led the Greeks to tolerate a greater variety of sanctuaries than any other people, even more than the Israelites and Egyptians; for besides sacred groves, altars, and holy temples, they admitted the tombs of heroes, and the statues of their gods and legislators as objects not to be defiled by unsanctified inter-

interference. A foe even presenting himself before his enemy's hearth, insured to himself hospitality and protection.

Then to the genial hearth he bow'd his face,
And, humbl'd, in the ashes took his place.

Nay, so entirely did they attend to the observance of all these matters, and so highly did they hold them in estimation, that they established the belief of a law of hospitality even among the gods; and yet so contradictory is human nature, that this very people, these tolerating religionists, had their persecuting and their holy wars.

Zeal, freed from the fetters of restraint, and impelled by unbridled passion, exhibits the most extravagant varieties. The most dissimilar propensities follow, and blind the bigot in rotation. Love, hatred, cowardice, magnanimity, all become jumbled together; and such is the
com-

compound, that it shews most hideous indeed. Thus the Greeks, though celebrated for refinement, and for the purest sentiments of civil and religious liberty, could yet enter into leagues and covenants; and in the spirit of devotion, butcher each other without mercy. Philip of Macedon, him that Demosthenes so loudly declaimed against, headed, if you recollect, a religious confederacy against the Phocians.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXXXVII.

ALL priests and archons are to be
“elected out of the nobility, whose duty
“it is to interpret all laws, both human
“and divine.” So spoke the law of the
Greeks; so spoke the law of the Hindoos,
Israelites, and Egyptians, long before
them; and the same effects sprang from
the same causes among all. Neither
Bramins, nor high priests, however, ever
ventured imposition upon so grand a scale
as the Grecians did. It is observable,
that in all countries a particular period
exists, when supernatural knowledge is
generally and firmly believed. The first
efforts of reason in society seem to delight
in superstition. What nation can be
pointed out which did not, some time or
other, admit of the belief of inspiration?
Hindoos,

Hindoos, Egyptians, Israelites, Christians, and Mohammedans, all had their prophets who boasted of an immediate, though, in general, a secret correspondence with heaven. Hence came religious apprehension; on apprehension was founded superstition; and from them both arose an ignorant and bigoted obstinacy, to cherish and support the prevalency of what they systematically denominated faith.

We have had occasion to touch upon this subject in the course of our preceding inquiries; but if, in the instances which we have hitherto mentioned, the positive controlling influence of priestly interference has been insisted on, how much more exorbitant will it appear, in the multiplicity of gods, mysteries, oracles, and prodigies, exhibited by the Greeks? That these were all instituted, or the greatest part of them at least, on selfish prin-

principles, no one, who has looked into the world, can in any wise doubt. They were not all, indeed, fabricated and clas-
 sed at once; a succession of them arose on the sound principle of interest and ortho-
 dox calculation; that novelty will ever be encouraged. "Increase and multiply" was, undoubtedly, as well understood by the Greeks, as by any other people what-
 ever: the revenues of the church were never to be neglected. Quintus Curtius can even tell us, that the plunder taken by the Phocians from the temple of Del-
 phos in the second sacred war, amounted to the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand talents, or twenty-nine millions sterling.

Believe me, men and gods with gifts are pleas'd.
 Ev'n angry Jove by off'rings is pleas'd.
 With presents, fools and wife alike are caught.

OVID. CONGREVE.

The oracles of Greece were what served, in the highest degree, to enrich
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not only the priests, but even the different states of the peninsula. They were the most intrepid institutions that ever were imposed upon the world: the face of the land was admirably calculated for them. Mountains, but particularly dreary caverns, where awful sounds, murmuring winds, and horrible darkness, served wonderfully to impress the mind with religious terror. In these caverns, the holy ones of Greece planned and concerted their deceitful mysteries: here they fabricated those responses in which credulity placed the most implicit belief. Well-contrived passages, hollow statues, and various other means, enabled them to carry on the farce without detection. Here, in short, those children of Erebus strung together those sentences which served but to bewilder the understandings of mankind.

The most celebrated of the oracles of Greece was the Delphic: here were to be seen kings, philosophers, magistrates, generals; in short, characters of every denomination, all indiscriminately playing the fool together; kingdoms at the same time depending on the ambiguous nonsense of a fanatic. The oracular fiat was generally given *viva voce*, although in some instances it was given in sealed letters, or written on the leaves of trees, as was customary with the Sybil of Cumæ. Whether the priestess of Apollo was admitted into the secrets of the priests, or whether she was chosen by them in consequence of her having a properly-adapted disposition to enthusiasm and superstition, is very immaterial. It is certain, that, if not convinced of the positive inspiration of the god, she yet was taught to act the part of preternatural ecstasy to a great degree of perfection. The accounts we have of her
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are singularly curious: her composure when seated on the Tripod; her silence; her gradual animation; and ultimately her fury, when she pronounced her oracles. What Virgil says of the Sybil, is finely descriptive of this phrenzy:

——— Aloud she cries,
 He comes, behold the god! thus while she said
 (And shiv'ring at the sacred entry staid)
 Her colour chang'd, her face was not the same,
 And hollow groans from her deep spirit came.
 Her hair stood up; convulsive rage possess'd
 Her trembling limbs, and heav'd her lab'ring breast.
 Greater than human kind she seem'd to look:
 And with an accent more than mortal spoke.
 Her staring eyes with speaking fury roll;
 When all the god came rushing on her soul.
 Swiftly she turn'd, and foaming as she spoke.

DRYDEN.

The responses given in this ecstatic manner by the Pythia, were carefully collected by the priests, and were by them put into verse; and sometimes in so slovenly and inharmonious a style, as occa-

fioned the irreligious to say, that Apollo, the prince of the muses, was the worst of the poets. But how the Pythia herself was instructed in these responses, is not so easy to determine. No previous study could possibly provide for all contingencies : communications from the cavern, must, assuredly, have worked the inspiration. Chrysostom and Origen, indeed, represent her on the tripod over the sacred vent, and in that manner, and not in the most decent position, receiving the oracular spirit ; nor is Justin Martyr behind hand with those fathers, for he does not hesitate to say, that during the act of inspiration, the devil had always an improper connection with the inspired. However this may be, the Pythia certainly had collateral aid, and it unquestionably must have come from the subterraneous chambers which were artfully constructed for that purpose ; and from hollow statues,

tues, in which the priests could place themselves.

But if the grossest superstition, in certain cases, reigned over the people of Greece, there were others in which morality and wisdom were fully as conspicuous; one of which I shall mention. We will not, with Theodoret, believe that the Eleusinian mysteries, which I now allude to, taught nothing but what was indelicate and obscene: that pious Christian was a little too uncharitable. We will rather submit ourselves to the decision of Cicero, who himself, of the number of the initiated, was, from personal knowledge, well qualified to pronounce a well-founded opinion. "These were
 "the mysteries," says Cicero, "which
 "have drawn us from the barbarous and
 "savage life our ancestors led. It is the
 "greatest good that has come to us from

“the city of Athens, among so many,
 “that she has spread amongst mankind;
 “it is she that has taught us not only
 “to live with you, but, still more, to
 “die with tranquillity, in the hope of
 “becoming more happy.” It is beyond
 a doubt, that of all the religious obser-
 vances of antiquity, none of them at-
 tracted such universal admiration as these
 mysteries: they were held in the highest
 estimation by the ancients; nor have the
 moderns failed to conjecture upon them,
 and, in some respects, to fix a kind of
 affinity between them and certain doc-
 trines handed down to us in sacred writ.
 But this we shall not touch upon: they
 evidently inculcated the sublime idea of
 the immortality of the soul. Cicero’s
 concluding words are clearly expressive of
 it; but the immortality of the soul was
 a very old idea among the Greeks.
 Homer, who lived ages before Cicero,
 and

and before the festival of Eleufis, fupports it in the moft unequivocal language :

'Tis true, 'tis certain, man, tho' dead, retains
Part of himfelf; th' immortal mind remains :
The form fubfifts without the body's aid ;
Aërial femblance, and an empty fhade.

POPE'S ILIAD, b. xxiii. v. 122.

And yet moral and praiſe-worthy as the Eleufinian myſteries were, one cannot refrain from ſmiling at the whimfical contradictions of this lively people on this very ſubject. The myſteries we have been ſpeaking of, and which were inſtituted to Ceres, in Attica, were forced to give way to another ſpecies of festival, inſtituted to the ſame Ceres at Pellene in Achaia. You may remember to have read the account of it : “ This festival continued ſeven
“ days, upon the third of which, all the
“ men and dogs being ſhut out of the
“ temple, the women, together with the
“ bitches, remained within, and having,

D 4

that

“ that night, performed the accustomed
 “ rites, on the day following returned to
 “ the men, with whom they passed away
 “ their time in laughing and jesting at
 “ one another.”

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXXXVIII.

THE Hindoos, the Egyptians, and the Jews, were all famous for paying a profound attention to omens, and to lucky and unlucky days ; nor were the Greeks exempt from the like proposterous superstition. When we read of an old woman's spitting in her breast three times to avert fascination, we cannot avoid smiling ; but when we see a brave body of men, and commanded by such a general as Xenophon, stopped at the very moment they were urged to commence the battle, by a soldier's sneezing in the ranks, we cannot but be sensible of indignation mingled with contempt. Terror from eclipses, earthquakes, or such like awful and uncommon phœnomena, we can readily be indulgent to ; but sneezing

ing is so thoroughly ridiculous, that one cannot, with patience, hear of a wise people's attending to it, and that in so serious a degree, as to be the cause of checking the spirits of an army, animated with all the ardor of patriotism and zeal. The prevalency of this weakness, however, must have existed during many ages; for Homer, who is supposed to have written five hundred and forty-eight years before Xenophon flourished, mentions it in his *Odyſſey*:

—— Telemachus then sneez'd aloud;
 Constrain'd, his nostril echo'd thro' the croud.
 The smiling queen the happy omen blest.

B. vii. v. 624.

In a soil luxuriant in superstition like that of Greece, we may be assured that no impositions were left untried, which priestly ingenuity could bring into reputation: accordingly we find they had soothsayers, divines, oracle-mongers; in short,
 every

every species of that exhaustless tribe of interested beings. They had their ordeals too, simple and complicated ; their lustral waters ; together with all the nostrums, tricks, and artifices of holy juggling.

Does superstition make men dishonest ? Or does it disperse those prejudices which in healthy minds are adverse to indirect practices ? The reply to this on the first view, is certainly no ; religious apprehension can never foster iniquitous ideas. But look at it a little nearer ; at expiations, absolutions ; how do they affect the dispositions of mankind ? Is it more consonant to reason to suppose, that the man devoid of superstition, and who acts as one responsible only to his Maker, or who conducts himself agreeably to the dictates of morality, is more likely to be a knave, than the timid wretch, who, giving his conscience into venal keeping, knows he can purchase

chase pardon, however flagitious may be his crime? On this view of the question, I am afraid we must alter the opinion to the affirmative. The man who has it in his power to act without the alarm of a severity of punishment, will always (and I am sorry to believe it to be the bias of human nature) be guilty of greater enormities, than he who has nothing but his conscience to stand in dread of. That monitor, indeed, would speak as freely to the one as to the other; but in the one instance it is lulled asleep by forgiveness and plenary indulgence; whereas in the other, it is left to its own native energy, and to the internal chastisement which it never fails bitterly to inflict.

The Greeks, of whom we are speaking, verify this pernicious effect of superstition in a striking degree, or, at least, manifest

fest that Virtue is not at all times the handmaid of Superstition. Notorious as the Carthagenians were for a loose morality, the universal violation of their faith was never more proverbial than that of the Greeks. Treachery and perfidiousness were their grand national features; inso-much, that Grecian was held in the same disreputable light with Punic faith. "That nation," says Tully, their great admirer, "never made any conscience of observing their oaths:" and Polybius again, more forcibly; "Among the Greeks," says that historian, "if you lend only one talent, and for security have ten bonds, with as many seals, and double the number of witnesses, yet all these obligations can scarcely force them to be honest." Fickleness, inconstancy, and a general aptitude to fraud, were, in fact, the characteristical marks of the Greeks. Even the austere children of Lacædemon could bend a little from the

the rigid rules of right: "that which is
"beneficial, can never be base," was
one of their favourite and most popular
adages.

And yet how contradictory does it appear, that this very people should have apparently so strong a predilection for good faith, as that in some places death was the punishment of such as had borne false testimony; and that almost every where, either the punishment due to the crime with which an innocent person was charged, was inflicted on the accuser, or he was condemned to the payment of a considerable pecuniary fine: they even held it a firm article of their belief, "That though false-swearers sometimes
"escaped human punishment, the divine
"vengeance would not fail to overtake
"them." From contemporary evidence, however, this seems to have had but in-
considerable

considerable weight in keeping them in the paths of righteousness, any more than the wholesome ordinance, "Injure not, nor wrong the stranger; put the bewildered traveller in his way, and be hospitable to him." To this last part of the injunction, it must be confessed, they seem to have been attentive: they were unquestionably an hospitable nation. How sacred they held that virtue, is expressly marked by Homer, on the meeting of Diomed and Glaucus, whose grandfathers, though they were enemies, had been mutual guests.

—Transport fill'd Tydides' heart,
 In earth the gen'rous warrior fix'd his dart,
 Then friendly thus the Lycian prince address:
 Welcome, my brave hereditary guest!
 Thus ever let us meet with kind embrace,
 Nor stain the sacred friendship of our race.
 Know, chief, our grandfathers have been guests of old.—
 Now change we arms, and prove to either host,
 We guard the friendship of the line we boast.

ILIAD, b. vi. v. 261.

But

But however careful they were to fulfil all the rites of hospitality, it is evident that their mal-practices must have forcibly struck such minds as those of Cicero and Polybius; and that those practices must have extended to foreigners, as well as to the members of their own immediate community; and this too, while the polished Athenians could weakly boast of their chamber of justice, which took cognizance of trespasses committed even by inanimate things: for instance, the instrument with which a man was murdered, and which in consequence incurred the penalty of being ejected out of the state of Athens*; nay, we are told, that this
very

* The common law of England relative to deodands or forfeitures, is not very dissimilar to this. Whatever is the immediate occasion of the death of any reasonable creature is forfeited: thus, for instance, if a carriage runs over a man, and occasions his death, not only that part which gave the wound, (as the wheel

very same Athens, the sacrificer, after having struck the animal, fled for it, and flung away his axe. The pursuers then seized the axe, and entered an action against it. The advocate for the axe pleaded it was less guilty than the grinder who had sharpened it; the grinder laid the blame on the stone which sharpened it; and thus they went on with a mockery of, rather than an attention to, those externals, which reflect veneration and dignity on justice.

wheel which runs over the body) but all things which move with it, and help to make the wound more dangerous (as the cart and loading which increase the pressure of the wheels) are forfeited.

FRAGMENT LXXXIX.

MANY of the laws of the Greeks were unnaturally and barbarously severe. Among others it was enacted, "If, through the infirmity of old age, or torture of disease, a father should be found distempered in his mind, a son should have the privilege of bringing an action against him, and in the event of his being cast, have the power of keeping him in bonds." The Athenians again, all accomplished as they have been held up to us, ordained that the aged and infirm should, in case of a siege, one and all, be put to death; and thus they rewarded the hoary warrior and statesman.

Merciful

- Merciful God! who can reflect without the keenest horror, on feeble and helpless age being thus wickedly crushed, when the remnant of life, perhaps honourably spent, was verging decently and quietly to its repose? Could men like these have hearts? Oh, unfeeling, pitiless, Athenians! The inferior order of domestics was likewise exposed to the most cruel and inhuman treatment; but inferior domestics, indeed, were looked upon as the positive property of their masters, as much so as their lands. It was not only lawful to chastise, torment, and starve them, but their masters were even allowed to put them to death at pleasure. Dreadful prerogative! Nor had the unhappy creatures who existed in this vilest species of slavery, the common appeal of the miserable, an appeal to the guardian protection of the legislature. Their wretchedness had the sanction of law stamped upon it:

they came into the world a prejudged race; they derived degradation and infamy from their fathers; they then passed it in inheritance to their children.

In Attica, slaves of a superior class had a greater degree of tenderness shewn to them, than in almost any other part of Greece. These (the first class) had the courts open to their complaints: they could prosecute their task-master for inhuman usage; they had the temple of Theseus to fly to as a sanctuary; they could even compel their lords to take certain sums of money, if such sums they could raise, for the purchase of their liberty. But what shall we say of Lacedæmon, that hardy foundery of iron souls? Plutarch speaks of a custom at Sparta, (and custom, you know, is the common law of the land) which beggars every thing in the annals of the world for barbarity, "It was an ordinance," says Plu-

Plutarch, "either of the Ephori or of
 "Lycurgus, by which those who had
 "the care of the young men, dispatched,
 "privately, some of the ablest of them
 "into the country, from time to time,
 "armed only with daggers, and taking
 "a little necessary provision with them.
 "These, in the day time, hid themselves
 "in the thickets and clefts, and there lay
 "close; but, in the night, issued out
 "into the highways, and murdered all
 "the Helots they could light upon.
 "Sometimes they set upon them in the
 "day, as they were at work in the fields,
 "and killed them in cold blood."

Now if such a regulation as this (to
 proceed a little farther in this dreadful
 scale) had existed among the Locrians,
 another canton in the same peninsula of
 Greece, for fortunately it was afterwards
 abolished at Lacedæmon, its duration
 would have stood a good chance of being

co-equal with the duration of the state; for it was an ordinance of the Locrian lawgiver, Zaleucus, that “ whoever proposed enacting a new law, or the abrogation of an old one, should come into the assembly with a halter about his neck; that his proposal, should his reasons be thought good and sufficient, should be embraced; but contrarywise, should they fail of carrying the necessary conviction, that the penalty should be death, by immediate strangling.”

We must confess that the Athenians were neither so barbarous nor so ferocious as the Spartans or the Locrians. In the passing of their laws in particular, they manifested an enlightened degree of understanding: “ It is the express direction of our great lawgiver,” says Æschines in his oration against Ctesiphon, “ that in every year our body of laws shall be adjusted by the legal inspectors in the popular

“ popular assembly ; and if, after due
 “ examination and inspection, it shall ap-
 “ pear that a law hath been enacted con-
 “ tradictory to a former law ; or that
 “ any one, when repealed, shall still hold
 “ its place among those actually in force,
 “ or that any more than one have been
 “ enacted on the same subject, that, in
 “ all such cases, the laws shall be trans-
 “ cribed, and fixed up in public on the
 “ statues of our heroes. That the pro-
 “ per officers shall propose the question to
 “ the people, that they may, by their
 “ voices, repeal some and establish others :
 “ that so, one single law, and no more,
 “ may remain in force on the subject.”

This, surely, speaks eminently for
 the Athenians : it shews abundance of
 wisdom and good sense ; so much, that
 it were devoutly to be wished, that cer-
 tain nations, of modern times, would
 move in a line so full of security to the

subject ; for it is a certainty, and a melancholy one, indeed, it may be called, that in most countries of Europe, nine-tenths of the people do not comprehend the various restrictions of their laws. Even those who do, if not compelled to it professionally, are so bewildered with niceties, distinctions, and quibbles of every possible denomination, that they are in a perpetual labyrinth of doubt and uncertainty. Laws should be clear, simple, and well defined.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XC.

THE Athenians were, in every respect, the most refined of the people of Greece. They had, undoubtedly, strange usages prevalent among them; yet strange as they were, they were greatly superior to those of many of the other states. One of the most extraordinary, and apparently the most unjust, was the punishment by Ostracism, and yet it is averred both by Aristotle and Plutarch, that it was absolutely essential to the preservation of a properly-poised, popular government.

That men should suffer for their good actions, seems somewhat paradoxical: no doubt, a pertinacious attention was necessary

fary to the conduct and deportment of the most eminent men ; and the people, as abhorers of royalty, were in the right to establish every possible check upon those whom superstition might lead them to suppose aiming at sovereign power. Necessary restraints, in a free government, against the ambition of individuals, are never to be condemned ; but yet, why inflict on the virtuous the penalties only due to the dissolute and abandoned ? The above writers, indeed, are great and respectable authorities ; but yet, with all due submission, I must confess myself a sceptic, with respect to such political positions. I know they breathe the doctrine that the severity of the law is manifested, to deter from crimes by example, rather than to punish the criminals who fall under its cognizance ; but that is not sufficient. It never can be reconcileable, at least to the

the

the conviction of a plain mind, that a man, very possibly the most valuable of the community of which he is a member, shall be liable to the indignity and sufferings of banishment, and for no other cause than that he has displayed superior zeal, virtue, and ability, in the service of his country. What shall we say of the fate of Aristides? He surely had claims on the gratitude of his fellow citizens, and yet he was banished! But what shews the punishment to be still more indefensible is, that an illiterate peasant, ignorant of the person of Aristides, went up to him on the day of the assembly of the people, and requested him to write the name of Aristides on his shell. The venerable magistrate, surprised, gently inquired if Aristides had ever done him an injury? The countryman replied no; "Why then," says he, "do you give your vote to banish him by the Ostracism?"

“cism? Because, says he, I every where
 “hear him called Aristides the just.” Is
 not this more than enough to make one
 dissatisfied with that singular regulation?
 If the votes of the majority of the mul-
 titude were to banish, and the majority of
 that multitude were to be actuated by
 similar reasons with the peasant, the
 situation of Aristides, which was also
 that of every other great and good man
 of Athens, was surely not enviable, at
 least it could not have been so with one
 whose legislative principles were not
 subtilized, and refined to a very great
 degree.

Some historians say, that the like jea-
 lousy of superior influence, was the grand
 source of the Athenian dislike to traffic:
 fearful, lest commerce should accidentally
 throw into any individual hands a danger-
 ous degree of wealth. From the works
 of

of Xenophon, Plato, and Aristotle, as well as from various others, it would appear, that all occupations from which money was to be derived, were reckoned disgraceful, and incongruous to the principles of a free government. Aristotle argues strenuously against the admission of artizans into the management of the affairs of state; and Plato is for punishing a citizen who shall addict himself to commerce: and yet this very Plato defrayed the charges of his travels by selling oil in Egypt.

This dereliction of trade, however, is contradicted by Plutarch, who says, in his life of Solon, that commerce was far from being accounted mean or ignoble: that persons of the first consequence did not disdain to betake themselves to such employments; that Solon applied himself

to

to merchandize; and that Thales did the same.

The fact is, probably, that commerce at one time was in high estimation, and at another in contempt. The fickleness of the Greeks almost makes contradictions reconcileable. However this may be, oratory, war, and politics, were, as with most other nations, the direct avenues to distinction; although those who succeeded at the public exercises, and obtained victories at leaping, running, throwing, darting, or wrestling, were, for a while, infinitely more carested and respected. Cicero even goes so far as to say, “that a victory in the Olympic games was little less honourable than a triumph at Rome.”

But the genius of the Greeks, (I allude particularly to the Athenians) though quick

quick and penetrating, was yet too versatile to be exclusively charmed with the higher qualifications of the mind: shows and public exhibitions, were their surest and strongest attractions. Independent of their gymnastics and other exercises, they had theatrical representations, with which they were delighted, even to fascination; and this infatuation transported them to the greatest excesses. Poets and players are represented as full of authority, and the first favourites of the State. The very sums appropriated by government to the supplying armies and navies with stores and necessary sustenance, were expended in support of the stage. Plutarch says, it cost more to represent some of the pieces of Sophocles and Euripides, than it would to have carried on the war against the barbarians. Nay, this passion extended to so outrageous a length, that it was whimsically, though, perhaps, truly said, that

“ fingers

64 PHILOSOPHICAL RHAPSODIES.

“fingers and dancers were pampered up
“with marrow and other luscious food,
“while the Admirals of their fleets had
“only meal, cheese, and onions, pro-
“vided for their subsistence.”

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XCI.

A WOMAN," says one of the primitive fathers of the church, "went to the play, and came back with the devil in her; whereupon, when the unclean spirit was urged and threatened in the office of exorcising, for having dared to attack one of the faithful, I have done nothing, replied he, but what is very fair; I found her on my own ground, and I took possession of her."

Now if Satan had held such sovereign sway over the Greeks at the time we are speaking of, what work would there have been for the priests? What herds of the unhappy female world would have been furcharged with devils of the vilest deno-

mination ! But insinuating practices of this nature had not yet found their way into Greece. Prolific as it was of holy phantoms, such infernal freaks had not yet crept in among them.

Licentiousness, in most things, seemed congenial to the Grecian constitution ; in none more conspicuously than in the intercourse of the sexes. The Greeks had a two-fold Venus, the one of heavenly extraction, was deemed patroness of chaste and faithful love : the terrestrial goddess presided over libidinous desires. Modesty and strict decorum attended at the altars of the one ; lewdness, wantonness, and debauchery, were the constant companions of the other. A custom, by the way, which was borrowed from Egypt and Phoenicia ; for the maidens consecrated in Egypt and Phoenicia to the celestial Isis, or Venus Urania, were strictly pure, while those

those devoted to the terrestrial Isis were prostituted in the most public manner.

It may, indeed, in the political scale of reasoning, be deemed harsh to stifle this legislative acquiescence in public prostitution positive licentiousness: it may, though contradictory to all moral principles, be considered still as a wholesome evil in a State. The unbridled appetite to sensual gratifications has ever been too strong to admit of absolute, compulsory restraint. Where the passions boil, and the blood runs high, no control can stop the rebellious eagerness with which they plunge into debauchery. Hence adulteries, fornications, and all the heart-rending train of evils, from which no nation, from the beginning of the world, hath hitherto been exempt. The application of a radical cure to the spreading, and to the contagion of prostitution, is, perhaps, impossible.

Thus, considered, therefore, the Greeks, like many other States, both ancient and modern, may be acquitted of licentiousness; and their licensing of courtezans may be accounted for by that hard law of necessity, which induces the toleration of a lesser evil, in order to the prevention of a greater. Regulations and restrictions may keep within tolerable bounds, a turbulent and pernicious stream, and so far they are advantageous; but they cannot stop the torrent; it will force its way in spite of all the efforts of man. Modifying, then, is perhaps all that can be done; for there mark is but too true, that vile as the characters of prostitutes are, they are rendered worse by the licentious state of their prostitution.

On grounds like these, (for the legislatures of every age and every nation have despaired of subduing, entirely, unchaste desire) Solon permitted women to prostitute

tute

tute themselves publicly in the temple; and the more effectually to strike at adultery, he ordained that courtezans should wear a peculiar garment. Thereby wishing to prevent, what Juvenal afterwards, in another place, so loudly exclaimed against, "Where is the street which abounds not in obscenity?" Notwithstanding all this, the Greeks were assuredly unacquainted with what sensible minds acknowledge to be the refinements of passion. It is true, Homer speaks feelingly of the divinity of love, in whose cestus was bound up

— Every art, and every charm,
To win the wisest, and the coldest warm :
Fond love, the gentle vow, the gay desire,
The kind deceit, the still reviving fire,
Persuasive speech, and more persuasive sighs,
Silence that spoke, and eloquence of eyes.

ILIAD, b. xiv. v. 243.

But these are the words of a warm-hearted old man, whose breast was inflamed by

the noblest and most generous feelings : the mass of the people of Greece was differently affected. All observation and all history shew, that wherever men have been addicted to the detestable and enormous inclination of love and fondness for each other, the delicate and amiable propensities to the tenderness and regard of the gentler sex have been evermore disregarded. It cannot, be, indeed, that natural and unnatural desires shall actuate the same frame, or that purity and the vilest depravity shall go hand in hand together. Women, in such countries, have been looked upon as of no other estimation than as the medium of the propagation of mankind. Hence it was that the Greeks had none of the comforts of domestic society ; their hearts and minds abandoned to detestable prostitution, rejected the joys and delights of female endearments.

Nor

Nor was this all ; the laws connived at it. Minos, the famous law-giver, permitted it at Crete : the legislators of Greece borrowed it from him. In short, so prevalent was it, and to so dreadful a length did it run, that Solon, the wise Solon, authorised it, and that not only by precept but by example. Socrates and Plato had likewise their amours ; in fact, it was the predominant and universal practice. Plutarch, in speaking on this subject, says, Solon thought it neither unlawful nor scandalous, but, on the contrary, honourable, and well becoming an ingenuous education, insomuch, that he forbade slaves the use of it, “ as it were, “ inviting the worthy to practise, what “ he commanded the unworthy to forbear.”

At the same time, however, that this horrible turpitude was so glaringly tolerated and extolled, it was a law, that

“ whoever had prostituted himself for a
 “ catamite, should not be elected archon,
 “ priest, or syndic; should execute no
 “ office conferred by lot or suffrage;
 “ be on an embassy; pass verdict; set
 “ footing within the public temples; be
 “ crowned on solemn days, or enter the
 “ Forum’s purified precincts; should he
 “ impose himself, and be detected, he
 “ shall suffer death.” This appears
 strangely inconsistent, if not palpably
 unjust; for why should the unhappy
 wretch who prostituted himself, have
 been more defiled and obnoxious, than
 the monster to whose pleasures he admini-
 stered? But we will quit the subject,
 it is too disgusting to dwell upon,

Notwithstanding the souls of the Greeks
 were not attuned to gentle desires, they
 yet, as a matter of political necessity,
 held matrimony in respect. In some of
 the

the commonwealths it was highly honourable, for it bespoke an affectionate consideration for the prosperity of the State, which could only be secured by the number and strength of its children. At Sparta, we know, the very time was prescribed for a citizen to marry. Refractoriness was held in contempt; so that a batchelor, of a certain age, was liable to the most gross, though legal, insults and indignities; for instance, the laws ordained, that he should run round the Forum naked; that at certain festivals the women should drag him round the altars, cuffing and beating him the whole way; and what was worse than all, but in which there was some sense, that from certain sports, where the young virgins scampered about naked, he should be excluded.

And, indeed, soberly speaking, these punishments were nothing more than what
an

an old solitary bachelor was entitled to; for obstinacy alone could have led him to a single life, since, as to fetters, there were none in the Grecian state of matrimony. A man might as well have taken a wife unto himself, as to have borrowed one. Wives were neither clogs nor restraints upon husbands, nor husbands upon wives: the most perfect freedom was allowed to each. A jealous disposition, it is true, or a disposition unfortunately delicate and refined, would have shrunk, perhaps, at the bare possibility of lending the lovely treasure of one's heart to the embraces of the first person who should solicit her. This, it must be acknowledged, might have prompted many a good soul to the cheerless life of celibacy. Every man had not nerves hardy enough to admit of making over his wife to another, as Socrates did Xantippe to Alcibiades; although it was thought a very disgraceful

ful sentence to a criminal even to lose the privilege of lending his wife.

Lycurgus, we are told, “ had a good
“ opinion of that man, who being old,
“ and having a young wife, should re-
“ commend some virtuous youth that
“ she might have a child by him, to in-
“ herit the good qualities of such a father,
“ and who should love that child as ten-
“ derly as if begotten by himself, chil-
“ dren being not so much the property of
“ their parents as of the commonwealth.”

But Lycurgus did not stop here; for
strangers, as well as fellow citizens, were
admitted to the same liberties; in short,
to so licentious an excess did the Lacæde-
monians carry their brutal desires, and
all in the true spirit of carnal reciprocity,
that the virgin daughters, it is recorded,
of the noblest houses among their confe-
derates, dared not be refused to the las-
civious

civious embraces of the Spartan generals and governors.

In the midst of all this indelicacy, however, a deviation from chastity in an unmarried woman was treated with infinite severity. Those who had passed the Rubicon, were deemed sufficient for the day; and, surely, "sufficient for the day" "was the evil thereof." How to compare these customs, and to what other usages to liken them, I profess myself ignorant. Thrace, as well as Babylon, we know, admitted of incontinency in females before marriage, though she inflicted exemplary punishment on adultery. The same, at this day, may be said of New Zealand, and most of the islands in the southern hemisphere, where parents are authorised to force their children to prostitution; but this matrimony in common, this sanctified prostitution of wives, is not, in my knowledge, any where to be

be paralleled. I shall therefore conclude, with a remark of the elegant and philosophic Hume, "That barbarous nations display their superiority by reducing their females to the most abject slavery, by confining them, by beating them, by selling them, by killing them; and that the male sex, among a polite people, discover their authority in a more generous, though not less evident, manner, by civility, by respect, by complaisance, and, in a word, by gallantry.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XCII.

GALLANTRY, which includes every thing tender, lively, and refined, was totally rejected by the Greeks: they scouted the idea, for they looked upon it as unmanly. Hence the women of Greece considered as of no other use than for the purpose of child-bearing, were subjected to the slavery of capricious wantonness. Cecrops, who instituted the ceremony of marriage among them, ordained that it should be celebrated between one man and one woman only, instead of the indiscriminate and promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, which had formerly subsisted. He likewise was the spring of some other regulations relative to the connubial state, which were held in estimation; but Solon was the man of men! he established

it as a law, "that all men should live
 "with their wives three nights, at least,
 "in a month, provided they were heireffes;" and farther, "that if they did
 "not become fathers by those heireffes,
 "the heireffes should have ample leave to
 "seek for aid among the nearest of their
 "husband's relations."

With all this liberality, however, Solon was still braminically phlegmatic: he would not allow that "a woman, of
 "innocent conversation should appear
 "abroad undressed (unveiled I suppose.)
 "That she should travel with above three
 "gowns, or with more meat and drink
 "than could be purchased with an obolus," an obolus, by the way, being no more than five farthings. Now this was certainly cruel in Solon; it was decent, to be sure, and aimed at the suppression of vanity and excesses; but it had been nearly as well for them (I mean according

ing to Grecian manners) had the plan of female discipline been carried into execution at Athens, which had been adopted by Lycurgus at Sparta. That flinty-hearted legislator, who had not a conception either of delicacy or shame, ordained that "the young women of Sparta should
 "wrestle, stark-naked, before the men,
 "and that they should dance before them
 "in the same manner, and sing certain
 "songs." By such exercises and hardiment, so bracing the nerves, and so strengthening the constitution, that the children of Lacedæmon should be acknowledged by all the world to be the most robust and hardy of the inhabitants of Greece; and he succeeded, with the assistance, indeed, of that more than hellish practice of destroying ill-favoured infants: a practice, which though tolerated by other legislators, was never, until his time, made a positive regulation of State.

The

The marriage ceremony being performed, (I speak now again of Athens) "the bride was usually conducted, in a "chariot, from her father's house to her "husband's in the evening, that time being chosen to conceal her blushes:" a precaution, we must suppose, unnecessary at Sparta, where the habitude of wrestling must have rendered it impracticable to blush. When arrived at her own house, the innermost apartments were allotted to her; there she was immured, without the converse of any but her own sex, excepting very near relations; neither was she at liberty to partake of entertainments, where there were any other present than those of her own, or of her husband's kindred. Mourning was the only time when an intermixture took place; and when all indiscriminately, we are told, "beat their breasts and "thighs, and tore the flesh from their "foreheads with pins and needles, there-

“ by testifying their sorrow, and gratify-
 “ ing the ghosts of the dead, who were
 “ thought to feed upon, and to delight
 “ in nothing so much as blood.” The
 manner of living of the Greeks, we have
 already hinted at; it improved, of course,
 as the different commonwealths became
 refined. Sparta alone adhered to her tem-
 perance and black broth, which made a
 Sybarite say, “ He no longer wondered
 “ why the men of Lacedæmon were the
 “ valiantest soldiers in the world, as any
 “ man, in his right wits, would rather
 “ die a thousand deaths, than live upon
 “ such execrable food.”

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XCIII.

VALOUR, as I have already noticed, was the ingredient in the Grecian character, on which they valued themselves the most: they were, unquestionably, a brave race of men. The only prayers the Lacedæmonians had were, “ that the
 “ gods would grant what was honourable
 “ and good for them, and that they
 “ might be able to suffer injuries.” Backwardness was, indelibly, stamped with infamy. A coward at Sparta was disfranchised from almost all the rights he possessed as a citizen; he was incapacitated from holding any of the honours or dignities of the State; it was even allowable for the lowest of the rabble to beat him when he came in their way, the

law forbidding him to lift his hand in his own defence.

The obloquy of a want of spirit extended itself even to his family and connections. It was disgraceful to intermarry with them; in short, nothing was too bad for a man marked with pusillanimity*. The *Amor Patriæ* was the ruling principle of action among the Greeks.

Death is the worst, a fate which all must try;
And for our country 'tis a bliss to die.
The gallant man, tho' slain in fight he be,
Yet leaves his nation safe, his children free:
Entails a debt on all the grateful State,
His own brave friends shall glory in his fate;
His wife live honour'd, all his race succeed,
And late posterity enjoy the deed!

ILIAD, b. xv. v. 582.

You will confer the greatest benefit on your city, says Epictetus, not by raising the roofs, but by exalting the souls of

* Even mothers, to expiate the crime, have been known to stab their children at their first meeting.

your

your fellow citizens; for it is better that great souls should live in small habitations, than that abject slaves should burrow in great houses.

The Greeks were, likewise, eminently proud of their great powers of oratory, and very justly so. The art of speaking was certainly carried at Athens to an unrivalled pitch of excellence; and yet there was something very illiberal and gross in their manner of haranguing. What by moderns would be termed unpardonable abuse, was by them conceived matter of little signification. *Æschines*, speaking against *Demosthenes*, calls him to his face “A vile impostor, “a robber, a plunderer of the public; “one that would weep with greater ease “than others laugh; and for perjury “was, of all mankind, the most ready.” To this *Demosthenes* replies, “Come, “then, thou man of dignity, examine
G 3 “thy

"thy own life, say of what kind hath
 "thy fortune been? A state of abject
 "poverty, an assistant to thy father-in
 "his school; employed in the menial
 "offices of preparing his ink, washing
 "down his benches, and sweeping his
 "room, like a slave, rather than the
 "child of a citizen. When arrived at
 "manhood, we find thee dictating the
 "forms of imitation to thy mother, as-
 "sisting in her trade; thy wages, tart,
 "biscuit, and new baked crusts." He
 then continues, "Now for our compa-
 "rative merits: you attended on your
 "scholars, I was myself a scholar; you
 "served in the initiations, I was initi-
 "ated; you were a performer in our
 "public entertainments, I was the direc-
 "tor; you took notes of speeches, I
 "was a speaker; you were an under
 "player, I was a spectator; you failed
 "in your part, I hissed you."

Such

Such was the language of the two most celebrated orators of Athens, and at the most refined period of her history. It sounds extraordinary to modern ears, especially as the parties were of high fame, the most enlightened of all the pleaders of Greece; but the truth is, commonwealths and republics are rather unfavourable to politeness and delicacy of manners. The most illustrious characters under such governments, are forced to level themselves with the brazen-tongued multitude: monarchies, therefore, in this respect, have evidently the advantage of all popular forms of legislation.

FRAGMENT XCIV.

“MY speech,” said Æschines, on reading these orations to his pupils while in banishment at Rhodes, “was received with admiration, that of Demosthenes with an extravagance of applause. How you would have been affected, had you but heard him deliver it!” But sovereigns, amongst the ancient Greeks, are represented as loading each other with the most disgraceful epithets :

Nor yet the rage his boiling breast forfook,
Which thus redoubling on Atrides broke ;
O monster ! mix'd with insolence and fear,
Thou dog in forehead, but in heart a deer !

ILIAD, b. i. v. 295.

Thus Achilles to Agamemnon ; which
fully shews that ideas of refinement, and
axioms

axioms of honour were, as they still are, greatly upheld by prejudice. How would common men shudder in these days at such gross expressions ! The Greeks were, proverbially, rough disputants, as well as rough actors ; but language such as this, is scarcely to be warranted in any period of society.

Popular assemblies, it must be confessed, are always liable to indecency in debate. Where all men are upon an equality, the many will deem it unessential to cull the most delicate flowers of oratory. Strong, downright expressions, sufficiently forcible to carry their meaning, are all that they will seek for. Hence, says a writer on the Grecian subject, if a fellow had presumption enough and a loud voice, he had all the necessary accomplishments. With no other pretensions, handicraftsmen were sometimes
sent

sent from attending on their trades, to take the command of armies.

They had, however, one very curious custom, and which, as a means of condensing an argument, would not, even in modern times, be an inconsiderable improvement; it was the regulation of the time to be allotted to each declaimer. Lest the “length of their orations should
 “weary the judges’ patience, and hinder
 “them from proceeding to other business,
 “they were limited by an hour glass, in
 “which water was used instead of sand;
 “when the glass was run out, they were
 “permitted to speak no farther. Whilst
 “the laws quoted by them were reciting,
 “or any other business happened to inter-
 “vene, they gave orders that the glass
 “should be stopped. Or if a person had
 “finished before the water was expended,
 “he could resign the remaining part to
 “any

“any other who might have occasion for
“it.”

But, as we have just seen, the intemperance of the Greeks, in addressing each other publicly, was certainly very far from being commendable. I would not be understood that freedom of debate should be stopped by the interference of unnecessary checks, or by those appeals to personal explanations, which have in other countries, been somewhat more than tolerated. On great and national points, no restraints should be thrown in the way of that vigour of the mind, which springing in the patriot's breast, animates him to something above humanity. It cannot, however, be denied, that a just decorum is as essential in the well-ordering and management of a State, as in the common intercourse of individuals in society.

The

The Romans, though somewhat faulty, were yet far less culpable than the Greeks in this respect; but neither the one nor the other of these nations had ever established those principles, which, by making a man judge of his own, as well as of the actions of others, placed him in the situation of prescribing the limits of good manners and good sense. Honour, as it is now called, was very little thought of by the ancients; with the Greeks in particular, integrity and virtue were of very little estimation. It has often been argued, that true honour depends not on the fluctuating opinions of this or that period of time, or on this or that body of men; that its pure and simple dictates speak in all ages, and in all countries alike: the position, I doubt, is erroneous. It is, indeed, finely said of virtue, and may with equal propriety be said of honour,

Knaves fain would laugh at it ; some great ones dare ;
But, at his heart, the most undaunted son
Of fortune, dreads its name and awful charms.

ARMSTRONG.

Honour, with the rules for its preservation, I cannot but look upon as the offspring of immediate and local prejudice. In the track we have already gone over, we have seen nothing of those sanguinary usages which have, within a few centuries, so firmly rooted themselves in Europe. The hardy sons of the Pagan world spurned at individual revenge ; to redress their country's wrong, and to devote themselves to it, they never were averse. But they neither allowed themselves to be hurried away by the impetuosity of passion, nor by the apprehension of shame. I do not presume entirely to condemn the practice of duelling, there are injuries to which the feelings of a susceptible mind cannot submit ; they are only

only to be healed by satisfying that spirit of retaliation which cannot but be roused when grievously oppressed. I address myself merely to the consideration of that false principle of honour, which, cherished by the absurd tyranny of custom, makes an appeal to the sword as necessary for a trifling offence, as for one which murders the peace, the happiness, and reputation of an innocent and honourable character.

That reason is given to the wind, when this subject comes to be considered, is unhappily most true. The young and the romantic scorn the temperate voice of prudence, which admits not that the field of contest can be the court of law; or that the death of either party can be the means of wiping off the injury, or the indignity which has been offered. Eternity may stare at them with an awful

ful and tremendous aspect! Religion may hold forth the punishments attendant on self destruction. Contemning all, they listen to nought but the prevalence of custom: the shame or fear of the opinions of man, rises paramount to the dread and apprehension of an hereafter. The prejudice having gone abroad, they, in despite of present and future consideration, rush with precipitancy and desperation into

That undiscover'd country from whose bourne
No traveller returns.

SHAKESPEARE.

But we will not dwell upon a subject which has employed the pens of the most enlightened men; and who have most ably shewn the modern ideas of honour to be in direct opposition to the mild precepts of Christianity, which enjoin resignation, forgiveness, humility, and a rigid forbearance from the blood of
a fellow

a fellow creature. Impatience, revenge, self-exaltation, and even murder, are the consequences of an unmanly acquiescence in the arbitrary decision of the unthinking.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XCV.

I WILL not contend that it was from a tender concern for each other, or from a principle of humanity, that the Greeks held private duelling in abhorrence. No people of the days in which they flourished, were more sanguinary; neither can it be supposed that it proceeded from cowardice, or inattention to what they called honour, for none were more ready to enter the lists, or more determined to conquer or perish. National, instead of individual injuries, were alone in their estimation worthy of contest, although Menelaüs and Paris may be adduced in contradiction. Those Princes, indeed, fought; but then their duel, however personal their quarrel, was in no respect

less national than that of Hector and Ajax; each was the consequence of a public defiance and on public grounds. Thus Hector to Ajax :

Oh first of Greeks ! his noble foe rejoin'd,
Whom Heav'n adorns, superior to thy kind ;
Since, then, the night extends her gloomy shade,
And Heav'n enjoins it, be the night obey'd.
Return brave Ajax, to thy Grecian friends,
And joy the nations whom thy arm defends ;
Some future day shall lengthen out the strife,
And let the gods decide of death or life !
But let us, on this memorable day,
Exchange some gift, that Greece and Troy may say,
" Not hate, but glory, made their chiefs contend,
" And each brave foe was in his heart a friend."

ILIAD, b. vii. v. 350.

This stile of duelling, it must be confessed, was heroic and magnanimous ; it was worthy great and illustrious characters, and if existing now, could not but be applauded. To risque one's life in the cause of one's country, is, to a noble soul, devoutly to be wished for ; it is an offering acceptable to God and man.

The

The vast distance between so glorious a principle, and that of little individual revenge, is too glaring to be insisted upon. How low the combatants in one light sink ! How grand ! How superior do they rise in the other ! Honour ! Thou surely art mistaken by many of thy modern votaries !

The Greeks, as they steered clear of capriciousness in the adjustment of personal concerns, were equally averse from conceiving the practice of duelling essential to other matters of society, which, since their time, have been most preposterously submitted to such decision. Oh that the heroes of Thermopylæ and Marathon could have arisen at the time, to have seen duelling made the arbiter of kingdoms, the expounder of the laws of nations ! What madness ! And yet the fact is not to be controverted.

H 2

Europe,

Europe, in her annals, can furnish variety of proof of such appeal. Even a thousand years, nearly, after the introduction of Christianity, at a Diet assembled at Ratisbon by the Emperor Otho I. of Germany, the disputed point of inheritance descending in a direct line, was referred, by the learned, to a decision by duel.

However feelingly, and however elegantly, Homer makes Hector speak, there yet is great reason to suppose, that though single combat might have been liberally conducted, public contest, with the general laws of war, must have been cruel among the Greeks. The base indignities heaped upon the body of this very Hector by Achilles, manifest it: Hector, exultingly, says he, is dead, and Ilion is no more!

Then his fell soul a thought of vengeance bred,
(Unworthy of himself, and of the dead)

The

PHILOSOPHICAL RHAPSODIES. 191

The nervous ancles bor'd, his feet he bound,
 With thongs inserted thro' the double wound ;
 These fix'd upright behind the rolling wain,
 His graceful head was trail'd along the plain.
 Proud on his car the insulting victor stood,
 And bore aloft his arms distilling blood.
 He smites the steeds, the rapid chariot flies ;
 The sudden clouds of circling dust arise.
 Now lost is all that formidable air,
 The face divine, and long descending hair ;
 Purple the ground, and streak the sable sand,
 Deform'd, dishonour'd, in his native land !
 Giv'n to the rage of an insulting throng,
 And in his parents' fight now dragg'd along !

ILIAD, b. xxii. v. 494.

This same god-like man, Achilles, we
 again, in another instance, see immolating
 a number of unhappy prisoners to the
 manes of his friend, Patroclus :

All hail Patroclus ! Let thy vengeful ghost
 Hear and exult on Pluto's dreary coast.
 Behold Achilles' promise fully paid,
 Twelve Trojan heroes offer'd to thy shade.

ILIAD, b. xxiii. v. 230.

Death, indeed, or slavery, was the lot
 of captives of whatever rank or charac-
 ter. The sovereign and the subject fell

undistinguished by the conqueror's sentence; even children were murdered at the breast, and their little limbs scattered to feed the beasts of the desert, and the fowls of Heaven,

But even this was merciful when compared with the helpless fate of women. How dreadful the judgement pronounced on them! The moment they fell into the victor's hands, they were allotted, though of the highest distinction, to the vilest menial offices, or were dragged to the loathed embraces, the detestable arms, of some blood-distained ruffian. How did the wretched Andromache suffer at the sack of Troy! Andromache, the relict of the gallant Hector! Virgil, in his description of her sufferings, sympathizes as he goes along, and his heart bleeds at every period that he turns. Savage brutality! More excessive than is to be found
in

in the wildest state of unqualified barbarism !

The customs, we must allow, at least the instances we quote, were nearly eight hundred years antecedent to Socrates, the founder of moral philosophy among the Greeks ; and, therefore, they must be considered as tolerated only in the early stages of their government. Succeeding ages introduced different manners ; never, it must be confessed, very refined, but such, at least, as ultimately abolished the dishonouring of women, and the disfiguring the body of an enemy. They even permitted their enemies, in later times, to bury their dead ; a ceremony they themselves held in the most sacred light.

Some space, said he, permit the war to breathe,
While we to flames our slaughter'd friends bequeath.
From the red field their scatter'd bodies bear,
And nigh the fleet a fun'ral structure rear ;

So decent urns their snowy bones may keep,
And pious children o'er their ashes weep.

ILIAD, b. iii. v. 390.

So superstitiously did they adhere to this last attention, to those whose lives were lost in fighting for their country, that the ten Admirals of the Athenians, who gained the celebrated battle of Arginusæ over the Lacedæmonians, were put to death for not gathering the bodies that floated on the waves, although it was demonstrated they were prevented by a tempest, which endangered the whole fleet.

I shall now take my leave of the Greeks. It was an observation of Tully,
“ That most of the arts and inventions
“ which are necessary to the management
“ of human life, owed their original to
“ the Athenians.” Tully, however, we have reason to suppose, was mistaken. India, China, and Ægypt, were unquestionably in an earlier state of knowledge
and

and improvement than the Greeks ; and other nations, it is natural to suppose, may have preceded India, China, and Egypt. The art of writing we have already considered ; and we have ventured an opinion, that Greece should not in equity run away with the exclusive glory of that sublime invention ; but let the introduction of it be ascribed to Cadmus : he was a likely person to give it entrance among the natives of that peninsula.

The noble art to Cadmus owes its rise,
Of painting words, and speaking to the eyes ;
He first in wond'rous magic fetters bound
The airy voice, and stopp'd the flying sound ;
The various figures by his pencil wrought,
Gave colour, form, and body to the thought.

To conclude : the inconsiderable territory of which we have been treating, was certainly the nursery of great and eminent statesmen ; of accomplished generals, and deep and subtle philosophers ; the unrivalled patroness, if not the parent, of
various

various arts and sciences ; but farther than this, candour forbids us to go. That she was the source of knowledge cannot be admitted. Her claim to perfection in what she undertook is indisputable ; and with this we will let her rest : for to say that she has not been equalled, would be erroneous. Experience, in a succession of years, diffused such light over the ancient, as it since hath over the modern world, that with a distinguished, though not with a pre-eminent, rank among the kingdoms of the earth, she and her admirers may certainly be satisfied.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XCVI.

WE now come to the review of a people, who from a contemptible state of poverty, and total neglect of every thing elegant and honourable in nature, in a very inconsiderable period of time, sprang to be the uncontrollable rulers of the world. The Romans you will in course suppose I mean, for none but the Romans ever exhibited so extraordinary an instance of exaltation.

Whether Æneas was the founder of Rome, or whether Romulus, her first king, was the original promoter of a regular form of society among the lawless banditti of which he was the head, is very immaterial. The origin of Rome,
like

like that of most other nations, is only to be guessed at; and it is impossible it should be otherwise, as in the single computation of time, for a great number of years, they had no other mode of ascertaining the termination of an annual period, than the high priest's driving a nail into a wall.

A great degree of reputation, in certain cases, however merited, increases rather than diminishes with age. Men voluntarily throw their portion of applause into the general scale without examination; they read and they are told of mighty nations that have achieved wonders; they venerate the dead; great names they repeat with admiration too. The distorted features of the characters of those who have gone before them, they allow quietly to repose in their grave. In a word, few take time to reflect on the foundation on which praise is erected, or
are

are so impartially discriminate, as to decide justly on the comparative merits of the past and the present.

I know full well the adventurous task which I am now about to undertake, and the violent prejudices which I shall have to encounter ; but the dangers are not to be avoided. My journey lies through them all, and on I must go, whatever it may cost me. We will not trouble ourselves with inquiries into the first parts of the history of the Romans ; it is unessential to our design. Romulus might have been the son of a god, and his nurse might have been a she wolf. Numa might have had his nymph Egeria, and a buckler, like that of Achilles, immediately from heaven. Prodigies, in short, may have been seen in the air. Stones may have been cut with razors ; and Vestals may have dragged ships on shore with their teeth. All these are not without
the

the most positive sanction of historical authority, and therefore to disbelieve them would be uncharitable.

The Roman story, however, coolly and dispassionately considered, is not, perhaps, entitled to the greatest portion of our respect, though it may be to that of our admiration. It exhibits a striking picture, but much more dazzling than beautiful. In all her domestic regulations, she was continually exposed to convulsions and distraction; and in those, in which she stood relatively to other nations, her conduct was a mixture of pride, perfidy, and rapaciousness. Never were there more notorious violaters of good faith, nor more insatiable plunderers. Morality never stepped in with its benign influence to curb their licentious thirst of dominion. The creed of their most virtuous patriots was, that universal sovereignty

reignty was pre-ordained to the Roman State.

The infatuation of the Greeks with regard to their own importance, has already attracted our attention ; but vain as the Greeks were, they yet were less presuming than the Romans ; and assuredly their pretensions were more admissible. In architecture, sculpture, painting, and music, they undoubtedly were eminent. The Romans, however, had nothing of this nature to boast. During the existence of their Republic, a space of almost eight hundred years, no proficiency was made in the arts and sciences. Even so late as the time of Augustus, excepting Vitruvius, it has been remarked, that the only celebrated artists were Asiatics or European Greeks. The Romans were, in fact, the pupils of the Greeks, not only in the polite arts, but in mathematics and philosophy : they
indeed

indeed ruled the land, but the Greeks
 “ preserved a kind of sovereignty over the
 “ minds of their masters.”

When we reflect on the affectionate
 and steady predilection which every Ro-
 man had for his country, we cannot but
 admire his character ; neither can we rea-
 sonably refrain from applauding that wise
 usage of the Roman government, which,
 by a religious anniversary, kept alive the
 idea, coeval with its constitution, “ that
 “ its empire was destined to everlasting
 “ duration, and pre-ordained to be ex-
 “ tended over the whole globe ;” these
 are laudable prejudices ; they give spirit
 and energy to a people ; they are conge-
 nial to the soul of man. “ We are born
 “ upon this land,” said a Canadian chief,
 who was solicited to cede his patrimony
 by a nation of Christians, “ Our fathers
 “ were buried here ; can we say to our
 “ fathers’

"fathers' bones, rise up and come with
"us to a foreign land."

But the Roman, in proportion as he loved his native soil, was wanton in his detestation of all others who had a similar affection to theirs. Hence the barbarous method of insulting the calamities of the unfortunate in their triumphs. Even among themselves, as if opposition alone was the prime source of sanguinary deeds, they delighted in blood, and shewed themselves unamiable and ferocious.

No friend, no fellow citizen I know,
Whom Cæsar's trumpet once proclaims a foe ;
Bid me to strike my dearest brother dead,
To bring my aged father's hoary head,
Or stab the pregnant partner of my bed :
Tho' nature plead, and stop my trembling hand,
I swear to execute thy dread command.

ROWE'S LUCAN, lib. i.

So spoke a partizan of the conqueror of
Pharfalia.

FRAGMENT XCVII.

IN the earliest dawn of life those strong impressions are given, which, generally speaking, mark the tenor of our future days: as we expect to reap, so then should we sow. The mind, "as an unweeded garden, runs to waste," unless carefully watched, and skilfully pruned of its luxuriant imperfections. Sensible of this, the Romans adopted a mode of education never too much to be admired; it was calculated to form illustrious characters; it was meant, and it succeeded, to give philosophers, orators, generals, and statesmen to the world. "Can there," says Cicero, in the person of Cato, "be a more important, or more honourable occupation, than to instruct the rising
"gene-

“generation in every duty to which they
 “may hereafter be called?”

The first part of the Roman education was domestic: fathers, mothers, and preceptors, watched over the childish and boyish days. The scholastic and elementary cultivation of youth, was next intrusted to philosophers and men of science, while the last and most sterling polish for the entrance to manhood, came from the hands of some character of eminence in the State. “Under the patronage of some illustrious person, the young men put themselves; they waited upon him in his house; accompanied him wherever he went; and equally improved by his instructions and example.” This was surely a happy mode of discipline; it partook of every possible advantage, both speculative and practical; it trained a child from his infant state to the moment of putting on

the gown, and his becoming an actor for himself, with the proper instances of virtue and dignity before him ; it, moreover, inspired him with courage to exert himself ; for what incentive so strong as the example which courts and warrants emulation ?

For a considerable length of time, the Romans were averse from studying the Greek or any other foreign language ; they confined themselves entirely to the Latin ; but not to that with any avidity or intenseness, saving a few contemplative men. Their thoughts were given to things, and not to words ; they were moderate in their literary appetite, not chusing to partake of more than they could digest. At length, indeed, they gave into a taste for the Greek writers, and followed up the pursuit with perseverance. Even the rigid Cato, after several weighty struggles against the introduction of the Greek

lan-

language and philosophy into Rome, took to the study of it himself, in a very advanced age.

From an education so carefully attended to; from the simplicity of the laws, so very short, that the repetition of them was the daily exercise of children; and from the interested concern which every one takes in a popular government, it is not to be wondered at that men should in all gradatory steps to consequence in ancient Rome, have manifested powerful instances of ability and judgement; and at length when they arose to places in the senate, that *that* assembly should present the most august and awful spectacle in the world. A council which presided, as Cicero says, over the whole earth, and whose members had Kings, cities, and nations, under their particular patronage.

Time was when rev'rend years observance found,
 And silver hairs with honour's meed were crown'd:
 In those good days the venerable old
 In Rome's sage synod stood alone enroll'd;
 Experienc'd Eld she gave her laws to frame,
 And from her seniors rose the senate's name.

OVID.

The various offices of the Roman government from the dictatorship in the Patrician line, to the tribunitian in the Plebeian, are all so perfectly well known to modern times, that it would be unnecessary to take notice of them here; but it is not so unnecessary to remark, that in all republics, and in all popular governments, there is an occasional, if not a permanent arbitrary authority vested in the executive branches of them; an authority almost as despotic as in unlimited, and infinitely more so than in limited monarchies. Thus a consul at Rome, when he had "administered the military
 "oath, and had proclaimed his levies,
 "became from that moment master of
 "the

"the public treasury, and of the lives
 "of those who were under his command.
 "The axe and the rod was no longer a
 "mere badge of magistracy, or an empty
 "pageant in the hands of the lictor. They
 "were, at the command of the father,
 "stained with the blood of his own chil-
 "dren ; and fell, without appeal, on the
 "mutinous and disobedient of every con-
 "dition."

Nor in case of the abuse of such au-
 thority, were there those means of ob-
 taining redress, which one would suppose
 to be inseparable from a state of systema-
 tic freedom. Many instances are to be
 produced of the tyranny and rapacity of
 those supreme magistrates, from the day
 of the expulsion of the Kings, to the day
 of the suppression of the Republic. The
 provinces of the empire groaned under
 their yoke and under the yoke of their pro-

Consuls; their transgressions cried aloud to heaven.

Livy tells us, that in the wane of the Republic, the elder Cato, in his censorship, accused Lucius Quintius of the following crime, a crime which, to the eternal disgrace of the senate, was not exemplarily punished. In his province of Gaul, Quintius had taken with him a boy of a good family of Carthage, of whom he was fond. This pathic, (for after the example of ancient philosophers, as Cicero makes Cotta observe in his nature of the gods, the Romans delighted in boys) it seems, was deprived the satisfaction of being present at a gladiatorian shew at Rome by the Consul, whom he often upbraided with so unlover-like a conduct. Sitting at table one day, and heated with wine, intelligence was brought to the Consul, that a principal Boian and his family were come over to the Romans;

he

he invited the Boian to a conference. The chief unsuspecting, and full of security, appeared before the Consul and conversed with him a considerable time. At length Quintius whispering his minion, asked him if he would be satisfied for his former loss by seeing the Gaul immediately expire? The boy replied in the affirmative; whereupon the Consul of Rome, the first magistrate in the world, seized a sword which hung over his head, struck the poor Boian in the face, as he was respectfully delivering his sentiments; and as he fled out of the room, imploring the faith of the Roman people, stabbed him to the heart.

Both high and low among the Romans were addicted to cruelty. From their very infancy they were accustomed to the sight of wretches weltering in their blood. This, indeed, was a practice more baneful than all the fore-mentioned culture of educa-

education could be beneficial. In the gymnastics and public games, which they borrowed from the Greeks, something manly, active, and at the same time inoffensive, was meant. But in the gladiatorial conflicts, those horrible contentions, where unhappy beings were forced to destroy each other; or where man and beast were unfairly matched, what could such fights effect but the steeling of the heart, and the rendering it insensible to every feeling of humanity? And yet in spectacles like these the Romans principally delighted. They solicited murder for pastime,

He who, unmov'd, can hear the dying cry
Of beasts, may see unmov'd a brother die.

and they suffered for it in the end. How bloody the annals of Rome, as the Republican fun declined! How numerous her slaughtered sons! How dreadful the proscriptions!

scriptions ! Oh it was a period big with enormity and with the foulest deeds ! Happy had it been for her had she abstained from the combats of gladiators as the Greeks did. " Throw down," cried an old Athenian philosopher, (on a proposal for their toleration) " first throw down the altar erected by our ancestors above a thousand years ago to Mercy, and then introduce those spectacles if you please."

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XCVIII.

BUT there were other considerations, and those of a very weighty nature, which, in the midst of bloodshed, lulled the souls of the Romans in tranquillity. They were certainly a people indifferent about eternity.

Dark and uncertain is man's fatal doom ;
 If years, or only moments, are to come,
 All is but dying :——
 Sooner or late, all mortals know the grave ;
 But to chuse death, distinguishes the brave.
 'Tis but to do, what is too sure decreed,
 And where our fate would drag us on, to lead.

ROWE'S LUCAN, lib. iv.

Thus they contented themselves. Their superstition and habits of reasoning led them to establish the data, that on the dissolution of those ties of sentiment and affection

affection which attach the mind to this world; or on the irreparable inroad of misery and misfortune, either of which prove existence to be a burden; death alone was the alternative, the resting place of nature. In consequence of this, they admired the man, who spurning at momentary pain, freed himself with dignity from the shackles of adversity and distress.

Not that they were universally of this way of thinking; many held it unwarrantable; especially those who embraced the opinions of Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato. The practice of suicide was undoubtedly prevalent; but Virgil expressly says,

The next in place, and punishment, are they,
Who prodigally throw their lives away.
Fools, who repining at their wretched state,
And loathing anxious life, suborn'd their fate.
With late repentance, now they would retrieve
The bodies they forsook, and wish to live.

Their

Their pains and poverty desire to bear,
 To view the light of heav'n, and breathe the vital air;
 But fate forbids, the Stygian floods oppose,
 And with nine circling streams the captive souls inclose.

DRYDEN, *ÆN.* b. vi. v. 585.

Virgil gives this as the Sybil's explanation to *Æneas*, on his descent into hell, of the punishment of a suicide; but the fact is, the ancients were very much divided on the subject of suicide. Many supported and practised it, whose wisdom and virtues we are taught to admire; others condemned it as cowardly, and displeasing to the gods.

As we have said, however, a certain contempt of life made the Romans superior to the fear of death. Thus, we find, they frequently devoted themselves for the good of their country; the instances are frequent. The General rushed among the enemy, and by sacrificing his life,
 insured

insured as much as in him lay the victory to his troops ; but I will not deprive them of the credit of heroism and magnanimity in such proofs of national attachment. The leaders who devoted themselves, were deservedly entitled to veneration. The custom, indeed, seems inconsistent with the common propensities of mankind ; but as Bolingbroke says, in the early ages of the Athenian and Roman governments, when the credit of oracles, and all kind of superstitions prevailed ; when heaven was piously thought to delight in blood, they who set such examples as these, acted an heroical and a rational part. But, continues the same writer, if a General should act the same part now, and, in order to secure his victory, get killed as fast as he could, he might pass for an hero ; but I am sure he must pass for a madman.

A dis-

A disbelief of an eternity, or a conviction that suicide was allowable, must, in many cases, no doubt, have had considerable weight with the Romans in this act of devoting themselves. Indiscriminately, therefore, the patriotic martyrs are not alike entitled to admiration; but I know not if in all their story, they have an instance, courageous as they were, of such genuine and noble gallantry as was manifested in the conduct of a Swiss officer, who, under the severe restraints of Christianity, and impressed with the belief of an hereafter, gloriously sacrificed himself for the safety and preservation of his country: they have none, I am certain, that surpass it. Arnold de Winkelried, at the battle of Sempach, seeing his fellow countrymen could not break through the Austrians, because, being armed from head to foot, they had dismounted, and forming a close battalion, presented a

front covered with iron, formed the generous design of devoting himself. "My friends," said he to the Swifs, who began to be dispirited, "I am going, this day, to give up my life to procure you the victory : I only recommend to you my family ; follow me, and act in consequence of what you see me do." At these words, he ranged them in the form of a triangle, and forming himself the point, marched to the center of the enemy. The shock broke the Austrians. The Swifs wedged themselves in, and finally discomfited them ; but their hero fell. The first onset deprived him of the existence he had so noble devoted to the welfare of his country.

Unquestionably there was an enthusiasm and an intrepid military spirit in the Roman character ; they felt for the honour and the glory of their country.

What Sarpedon says to Glaucus, each Roman felt, or, at least, seemed to feel :

Could all our care elude the gloomy grave,
Which claims no less the fearful than the brave ;
For lust of fame, I should not vainly dare,
In fighting fields, nor urge thy soul to war.
But since, alas ! ignoble age must come,
Disease, and death's inexorable doom ;
The life which others pay, let us bestow,
And give to fame what we to nature owe ;
Brave tho' we fall, and honour'd if we live,
Or let us glory gain, or glory give.

ILIAD, b. xii. v. 387.

But courage and resolution were qualities never denied the Romans ; their intrepidity was proverbial. The truth is, their hearts were too much hardened ; they affected too greatly severity of manners.

A Roman despised the man who could be sedulously careful of the preservation
of

of his person. "To the gods," he would say, "that charge should be confided;" but in proportion as he was thus regardless of himself, he was regardless of the feelings and safety of those he had to deal with. "There is nothing that the lord may not do to his slave," says Seneca, the father; "no torment but what may be inflicted on him with impunity; nothing command him but what may be exacted with the utmost rigor and severity, so that all manner of cruelty may be exercised by the lords upon their slaves." Again, Caius, the lawyer, "It is allowed by all nations to the lord, to have power of life and death over his slave." And Cato the censor, that great, that respectable character, the divinity almost of the Romans! he, that very Cato, held it unwise to maintain slaves in their old age or infirmities, however serviceable they might previously have been. It is said he

used to turn them naked out of doors, or
let them starve to death in his own
family!

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XCIX.

“IF the debtor be insolvent to several creditors, let his body be cut in pieces on the third market day ; it may be cut into more or fewer pieces with impunity ; or if his creditors consent to it, let him be sold to foreigners beyond the Tiber.”

In this cruel strain ran a law of the Decemvirs ; nor was it to be otherwise than literally understood. How inhuman ! But, as we have already said, the Romans too often shed unnecessary blood.

If among, each other, sanguinary practices were not only tolerated but prescribed, as in this instance by the laws, what can we suppose their conduct to have been to aliens, and to those in opposition to them ? It was a mixture of cruelty

and avarice, the two most diabolical principles that ever actuated the breast of man. To an enemy they gave quarter, only to enslave, or, perhaps, to murder:

Consider well the captive's lost estate,
Chains, racks, and crosses for the vanquish'd wait;
My limbs are each allotted to its place,
And my pale head the rostrum's height shall grace.

ROWE'S LUCAN, lib. vii.

An enemy, when disarmed, was either killed, given away, or sold to the best bidder. This is exemplified by Lucan, where we even find the treatment of Roman by Roman to be guided by no milder rule :

From me thy forfeit life, he said, receive,
And, though unwilling, by my bounty live;
That all, by thy example taught, may know
How Cæsar's mercy treats a vanquish'd foe.
Still arm against me, keep thy hatred still,
And if thou conquer'st, use thy conquest, kill.
Returns of love, or favour, seek I none,
Nor give thy life, to bargain for my own.

LUCAN, lib. ii.

Thus,

Thus, as an elegant moralist observes, the game of human life went upon a high stake among the Romans, and was played with a proportional zeal. Our manners are so different, continues Ferguson, and the system upon which we regulate our apprehension in many things, so opposite, that nothing less than the Greek and Roman literature could make us endure the practice of ancient nations.

The Romans, we may safely say, were born and educated warriors. Every citizen was a military man; he entered himself in the army, or in the militia, at an early period of life, and continued in it till he was fifty years of age, when he ceased to be considered as effective, if such was his inclination. From this system of universal military discipline, the whole empire may be supposed to have composed but one immense body of soldiers, ready to be detached to such quar-

ters of the globe as interest might point out to them; and from this system most certainly arose that excess of power and dominion which the Romans, at various epochs of their government, enjoyed without a rival.

What carnage and desolation were the consequence of Roman triumphs! How many thousands, how many millions, were sacrificed at ambition's shrine! It is a melancholy subject to dwell upon; and yet the god-like leaders of those bands, as they were called, could talk of clemency and mercy. Was there a Sylla, a Cæsar, a Pompey, or an Augustus, but would affect commiseration at the execution of a criminal? And yet was there one of them who did not help, in person, and with his followers, to drench and saturate the earth with blood? Is the murder of one individual an atrocious crime, and the murder of fifty thousand
a praise-

a praise-worthy action? Inhuman sophistry! The wretch who, driven by hard necessity to-day, and who robs his neighbour of a bare sufficiency to supply his wants, is prosecuted and punished as a monster teeming with iniquity and guilt, while the splendid and exalted bare-faced villain tears from the helpless the means of subsistence; plunders and ravages nations and countries that never did him harm; fills up the scene with the butchery of the gallant souls who dared to withstand his oppression; and then has his poets and historians to sing and record the glory and transcendant brilliancy of his career! Oh! it is a melancholy picture, and justly does old Homer say,

Curs'd is the man, and void of law and right,
 Unworthy property, unworthy light,
 Unfit for public rule, and private care,
 That wretch, that monster, who delights in war:
 Whose lust is murder, and whose horrid joy,
 To tear his country, and his kind destroy!

ILIAD, b. xix. v. 87.

Ambition,

Ambition, indeed, under the discipline of reason, and the direction of justice, is a noble passion; but the ambition of a warrior, as it has been strongly remarked, whose glory is measured only by the length of his sword, is infernal; and every aspirer after universal monarchy, from Alexander down to Louis XIV. is only a glorious murderer, an eminent robber, and a pestilence in the human shape. Good heaven, what scenes were presented during the civil wars at Rome! One's blood runs cold at the bare remembrance. I saw, recites the poet,

I saw where hapless Marius' brother stood,
 With limbs all tore, and cover'd o'er with blood:
 A thousand gaping wounds increas'd his pain,
 While weary life a passage sought in vain.
 That mercy still his ruthless foes deny,
 And whom they mean to kill, forbid to die.
 This from the wrist the suppliant hands divides,
 That hews the arms from off his naked sides:
 One crops his breathing nostrils, one his ears,
 While from the root his tongue another tears;
 Panting awhile upon the earth it lies,
 And with mute motion trembles e'er it dies.

Laſt

Last, from the sacred caverns where they lay,
The bleeding orbs of sight are rent away.

LUCAN, lib. ii.

What a bloody spectacle! And yet this was no less than the sacrifice of the innocent brother of Caius Marius, by the sanction and authority of Sylla!

Notwithstanding, the ferocious character of the ancient Romans, and the particular instances which we have already quoted relative to debtors, it is yet certain, that their general laws were, of all others, the least sanguinary. Capital punishments were rarely admitted; banishment and confiscation of goods being the ordinary punishment of the greatest crimes. I speak now of the latter days of the republic, for in the early ages, death was as frequently and as exceptionably inflicted as among other people. The Porcian law, indeed, in the four hundred and fifty-fourth year of Rome,

Rome, carried the principle of lenity to a pernicious degree, for it prohibited the taking away the life of a citizen, without an appeal to the people; this was assuredly wrong. Capital punishments are unfortunately necessary in a well-regulated society; they must be recurred; to although scarcely any thing, it must be confessed, can authorize the destruction of mankind by the hand of man.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT C.

FROM the reflections which naturally arise from the preceding fragments, as well as from a common consideration of the casualties of life, it would seem that destruction was almost as essential as generation to the system of the universe: were it not so, the world might be overstocked, and a more dreadful series of contention might be the consequence. How various are the ways of quitting this existence, while one, only one, is given us for admission into it. As the fruit of a garden, we are fated to be the production of a parent stock, and as that fruit, we are liable to be scattered by the winds at pleasure;—still, however, we shoot up. The instinct of our species prevents

prevents us from perishing entirely. We do fall, and in abundance; but merely, it would appear, as if by death it were intended we should quicken into life.

The havock of mankind in every division of the globe has been astonishing. Tradition and history are scarcely filled with narratives of any other nature than those of wars, and human desolation. From the murder of Abel, to the moment at which I am writing, and, no doubt, *ad libitum*, merciless as the beasts of the forests, though unimpelled by similar necessities, we have been piously cutting each others throats; and weltering in blood, as if it were amusing and grateful to our natures. This sanguinary propensity has, perhaps, decreased the population of the earth; at least we have reason to conjecture so, for it is said to be pretty accurately ascertained, that not
above

above a third part of the vast rotundity we tread upon is cultivated or inhabited.

Supposing, then, the calculation of political arithmeticians to be just, that the earth contains no more than a thousand millions of inhabitants, it would follow, that the space and the means which there are for the subsistence of two thousand millions more, have been uselessly created; a conclusion this not a little impious. It is probable, therefore, that the regions yet unexplored, may make up what appears to us a decrease of our species. Infinite Wisdom always suits the means to the ends; "he fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all."

The matter, however, is, that what we call the world, that is, the known parts of it, is supposed to contain two thirds less of inhabitants than it is capable of sustaining; and that, from all accounts,

counts, it was even in the days of which we are speaking, eighteen or nineteen centuries ago, infinitely more populous than it is now: the moderns have certainly played their parts in the slaughtering of each other; that they have exceeded the ancients can never be admitted. Let the present number, then, be as they may, and let their falling, as autumnal leaves, be lamentably descanted on, there yet, as I have said before, is a generative instinct which introduces into this world eighty two thousand beings, and that is pretty well, every four and twenty hours.

But to quit this digression, the Greeks, it has been already noticed, borrowed their religious ideas from the Egyptians, Phoenicians, Thracians, &c. — The Romans, again, borrowed from the Greeks; Polytheism was peculiarly adapted to the Roman character; the champions

pions and advocates, however, of ancient Rome, deny that either Rome or Greece admitted of a plurality of gods; they declare the reproach to be one of the greatest errors into which the moderns have fallen. Thus, Voltaire says, "Let any man shew me, in one word, from whence it may reasonably be inferred, that they had more than one Supreme God, and I will allow the censures to be just: but if no such fact, no such expression can be found, and if, on the contrary, they every where abound with monuments and passages which bear testimony to one Supreme God, superior to all the other gods, we are bound to acknowledge that the judgments passed on the ancients are as rash as those we frequently pass upon our contemporaries."

But with deference to this celebrated writer, I cannot admit, that because they

had one supreme, they yet had no other gods. His own words are repugnant to his position ; he confesses that they every where abound with monuments and passages which bear testimony to a god superior to all other gods ; and has any more been insisted on ? No man ever classed the divinities of the heathen mythology in an equal degree of rank and veneration. Jupiter, or whatever he was denominated, the father of gods and men, in every system, held the pre-eminent situation. His providence was omnipotent ; his fiat bound both heaven and hell ; but was there not a regular gradation of divinities, or attributes, perhaps, of the first divinity which received adorations separate and distinct ? Had they not all their respective altars, their prescribed forms of worship ? The fact is beyond contradiction ; a plurality of gods was unquestionably believed by Romans as well as Grecians.

In

In asserting this, I do not mean to advance it as an opinion, that the wise and the thinking part of the ancients gave into the mythological absurdities of which we read. On the contrary, many of the sages of those days had the most awful ideas of the all-bounteous Ruler of the world.

God, who the whole created mass inspires :
Through heav'n and earth, and oceans depth he throws
His influence round, and kindles as he goes.
Hence flocks, and herds, and men, and beasts, and fowls,
With breath are quicken'd, and attract their souls :
Hence take the forms his prescience did ordain,
And into him at length resolve again.

VIRGIL. GEORG. lib. vi. DRYDEN.

And again Horace :

That Power Supreme whom gods and men obey,
Who time commands, and rules the earth and sea ;
Who claims o'er all the first and highest place,
Whom none is like, to whom none second is.

Lib. i. od. 12. CREECH.

These are great and respectable authorities; they present us with the opinions

entertained of a Supreme Divinity by those two great poets, and, as it is probable, by the enlightened of every age; but they do not entirely set aside the belief of a plurality of gods. On the contrary, Horace seems to admit of inferior deities, only that he subjects them to command; but Polybius is still more decided on the subject. "The greatest advantage," says this writer, "which the Roman government seems to have over the States, is the opinion publicly entertained by them about the gods; and that very thing which is so generally decried by other mortals, sustained the republic of Rome, I mean superstition: for this was carried by them to such a height, and introduced so effectually into the private lives of the citizens, and the public affairs of the city, that one cannot help being surpris'd at it. But I take it all to have been contrived for the sake of the populace. For if a society

“ society could be formed of wise men
 “ only, such a scheme would not be ne-
 “ cessary ; but since the multitude is al-
 “ ways giddy and agitated by illicit de-
 “ fires, wild resentments, and violent pas-
 “ sions, there was no way left of restrain-
 “ ing them but by the help of such se-
 “ cret terrors and tragical fictions : it
 “ was not, therefore, without great pru-
 “ dence and foresight, that the ancients
 “ took care to instil into them notions of
 “ the gods and infernal punishments.”

After these, I think, any farther au-
 thorities to prove the existence of Poly-
 theism among the ancients would be su-
 perfluous. But a plurality of gods is not
 all that should be carried to their ac-
 count ; their whole system of mythology
 was, in the general acceptation,—and this
 cannot be denied,—shamefully immoral
 and indecent. No debaucheries, no crimes,
 of which their deities were not guilty.

How like a reprobate is Jupiter depicted by the poets ; into how many shapes did he transform himself to introduce sorrow upon earth, and gratify his own libidinous desires ! The achievements of Jupiter, indeed, and of his convenient squire, the wily and designing Mercury, would disgrace even the character of the most profligate of mortals.

But though some of the divinities of the Greeks and Romans were disgusting, others were charming and captivating. Of these, in the first estimation, stood the graces, lovely dispensers of every thing smiling and agreeable in nature : they are described as giving to places, persons, works, and to every thing in its kind, that finishing charm which crowns all its other perfections, and is, as it were, the flower of its excellence. No goddesses had so many adorers ; all ranks, all professions, and all ages, paid them
homage.

homage. The arts and sciences, in particular, acknowledged their unrivalled power: they were thought to confer grace, gaiety, equality of temper, liberality, eloquence, and wisdom; but their most noble prerogative, and that the most truly divine, was their presiding over kindness and gratitude.

FRAGMENT CI.

WE read of an Ethiopian nation, in former days, that had a dog for its King: that he was kept in great state, surrounded with a numerous body of officers and guards, and in all respects royally treated. We likewise read that the Romans, the rulers of the world, had an anniversary even to the days of the Emperors Nerva and Trajan, when it was the custom to carry a goose in procession, in a litter richly adorned, and at the same time a dog fixt to a gibbet.

Now which of these were the most superstitious, the barbarous Ethiopians, or the accomplished descendants of Romulus, is a question which it is difficult to decide;

decide; each might have been grateful for benefits received. The dog, in the first instance, might, by barking opportunely, have given the alarm, and thereby have saved a capital; the latter, by cackling, might have rendered the same service. How highly, therefore, are caution and cool discrimination necessary in the judgement to be formed of comparative merits!

I will not enter into an unprofitable maze of mythological disquisition; it is sufficient for me to hint that the Romans were superstitious; that they believed in a plurality of gods; and that the Sybilline volumes were the great arcana of their religion. Volumes, indeed, which were not open to the eyes of the profane and vulgar, but which were inspected solely by the elect, (no uncommon policy, as I have already remarked) and
to

to whose exposition every thing was submitted.

The mist of error, however, was totally dispersed from before the eyes of many of the most celebrated of the Romans; they even placed their hopes in an immortality of the soul. "The soul, during her confinement within this prison of the body, is doomed, by fate, to undergo a severe penance; for her seat is in heaven. This opinion," continues Cicero, "I am induced to embrace, not only as agreeable to the best deductions of reason, but in just deference also to the authority of the noblest and most distinguished philosophers. Accordingly Pythagoras and his followers firmly maintained that the human soul is a detached part, or emanation, from the great universal soul of the world."

Can any doubt that God resides in man,
That souls from heav'n descend, and when the chain
Of life is broke, return to heav'n again?

— man's the image of the God.

MANIL. lib. iv. CREECH.

“In a word,” concludes this eloquent
and penetrating orator, “when I con-
sider the faculties with which the hu-
man mind is endued; its amazing cele-
rity; its wonderful power of recollect-
ing past events, and sagacity in discern-
ing future; together with its number-
less discoveries, I feel a conscious con-
viction that this active, comprehensive
principle cannot possibly be of mortal
nature. There is a strong presumption
that the soul possessed a considerable
portion of knowledge before it entered
into the human form, and that what
seems to be received from instruction,
is, in fact, no other than a remini-
scence, or recollection of its former
ideas. It does not seem to have been
“gene-

“ generated, and therefore cannot be
 “ liable to dissolution. Should it be sup-
 “ posed generated, it cannot be proved
 “ but that it is liable to corruption.”

What exquisitely clear and comprehensive deductions. How forcibly does this reasoning rush in and settle on the senses! And yet Cicero was a Pagan ; but Cicero was not singular in his ideas. The most enlightened of his countrymen advanced the same opinions ; some of them even, like Moses, revert to a creation, and shew that man was born to immortality.

A creature of a more exalted kind
 Was wanting yet, and then was man design'd :
 Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,
 For empire form'd, and fit to rule the rest.
 Whether with particles of heav'nly fire,
 The God of nature did his soul inspire ;
 Or earth, but new divided from the sky,
 And pliant still retain'd th' ætherial energy.

OVID'S MET. lib. i. DRYDEN.

Thus

Thus Ovid, as well as Cicero, Virgil, Horace, and various others, admitted the belief of an immortality; and what is still more extraordinary, it was to the writings of these very authors, who were ignorant of Christianity, that our Miltons and Popes, our metaphysicians and divines, have severally been indebted for many of their most beautiful, and most orthodox ideas.

The minds of these philosophers and poets, unillumined by revelation, soared to a knowledge of the first principle of things. Bursting the fetters of superstition, they would wing their way into regions yet unknown: they reached the confines, indeed; farther it was denied them to go.

As when a wretch from thick polluted air,
Darkness and stench, and suffocating damps,
And dungeon horrors, by kind fate discharg'd,
Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure
Surrounds him, and elysian prospects rise,

His

His heart exults, his spirits cast their load;
 As if new born, he triumphs in the change :
 So joys the soul, when from inglorious aims
 And sordid sweets, from seculence and froth,
 Of ties terrestrial set at large, she mounts
 To reason's region, her own element,
 Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.

YOUNG'S FOURTH NIGHT, v. 563.

But, as I have already said, the mass of the people of Rome was not impressed with this idea of an immortality. Even some, who were by no means of the inferior class of reasoners, as Plutarch observes, were in the dark ; for “ by what “ means,” says he, “ the soul in another “ life shall be affected with happiness or “ misery, is totally concealed from human penetration ;” and perhaps their ignorance was happy for them ; for the presumption of a superior degree of knowledge often begets fanaticism and intolerance ; and it is to be proved, that no one instance of religious persecution was known at Rome from the seven hundred fifty third year before Christ, when
 it

it was founded, until the propagation of the Christian faith in the time of Augustus, when disputes commenced with the priests of the empire.

Nothing, indeed, can furnish more positive proof of this, than the freedom with which the Romans delivered themselves in public, and the great latitude they took in all their literary speculations. Many of them were sceptics, many of them unbelievers. In short, they were in opinion, and in action, as relative to themselves, what they thought proper. All that was required of them was conformity to the laws, and a respectful observance of the rituals of the established faith.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT CII.

SO much morality, so much good sense, and so much absurdity as we have seen blended together in the religious character of the ancients, proves to us the inconsistency and the wretchedness of human nature. It is an useful lesson, however ; it shews us the “ real estimate of “ things which no man unaffected ever “ saw ;” it speaks to the very soul ; it bids us not be arrogant, but resignedly to reconcile ourselves to the conviction, that innumerable, though not blamable perhaps, have been, and ever must continue, the differences in the opinions and the manners of mankind.

It is somewhat curious, that the adorers of an adulterous Jupiter, of an unchaste

Venus, of a thieving Mercury, and of other inferior and no less contemptible divinities, should still have possessed a perfect idea of honour and justice, of good and evil; but so it was. Those universal principles of morality and benevolence which pervade the whole race of man, urged them to the detestation of those crimes in each other, which prescription tolerated in the inhabitants of the spheres. Vice, armed even with sacred authority, as Rousseau observes, descended in vain on earth. The voice of nature, more powerful than that of the gods, made itself respected, and seemed to have banished vice and flagitiousness to heaven.

The Romans, indeed, as well as the Greeks, wisely and carefully maintained the worship and religious ceremonies established by law, at the same time that they gave the most unbounded liberty to

speculative inquiries. A good citizen, they were convinced, would always respect the institutions and observances of his ancestors, though, as a philosopher, he might smile at their superstition.

Hence Pliny, the elder, who denied the existence of a God, unless it were the sun, was never called to an account for his opinions; neither was Lucretius, although he went a step farther, and denied every thing even to a Providence.

Cicero, however, who of all the Romans considered the subject of religion with the greatest depth of thought, speaks strenuously in support of the existence of a one all powerful Ruler of the universe. He maintains, as his learned biographer Middleton observes, that there is one God, or Supreme Being, incorporeal, eternal, self existent: who created the world by his power, and sustained it
by

by his Providence; and this he inferred from the sense of all nations; the order and beauty of the heavenly bodies; the evident marks of counsel, wisdom, and a fitness to certain ends observable in the whole, and in every part of the visible world; and declares that person unworthy of the name of man, who can believe all this to have been made by chance, when, with the utmost stretch of human wisdom, we cannot penetrate the depth of that wisdom which contrived it. "No-thing more can be wanting," says he, "to make us acknowledge the existence of an eternal and all-perfect Being, who merits the veneration of the human race."

Sublime ideas, such as these, could have spread themselves but an inconsiderable way. The grossest imaginations were the lot of not only the multitude, but of the higher order of Romans. Who has

not read of their hook-nosed, flap-eared, beetle-browed, pink-eyed, jolt-headed gods? Yet even these could engender bigotry and superstition, convulsionaries, revealers, recluses, penitents; in short, visionaries of every denomination! Nay, so great an effect had the force of the spirit on the disordered intellects of enthusiasts, that Seneca says, they endeavoured to appease the gods by methods which an enraged man would hardly have taken to revenge himself. Their penances were severe. “ They beat, pinched, and
 “ tore themselves with invincible perseve-
 “ rance.” Something, perhaps, like certain of their Christian successors, whom, we are told, on a certain day of lent, assembling, indiscriminately, in the churches of the city, very deliberately armed themselves with whips, cords, lashes, and such like offensive weapons, and on the candles being put out, and the bells beginning to ring, stripping themselves naked, most
 piously

piously set to work upon their own shoulders, and did so flea them, that their groans were to be heard from one extremity of the town to the other.

In short, says Seneca, "if there be
 "any gods who desire to be worshiped
 "after this manner, they do not deserve
 "to be worshipped at all, since the worst
 "of tyrants, though they have some-
 "times torn a tortured people's limbs,
 "have never yet commanded men to tor-
 "ture themselves.

FRAGMENT CIII.

THE mind, confident of its own powers, or at least satisfied with the general operations of nature, without taking the pains to inquire how and whence they arise, is, in the known and regular course of things, resigned and perfectly at rest; but, in unexpected difficulties, or untoward accidents, when indecision or irresolution takes the lead, it then becomes suddenly overwhelmed with perplexity. Doubt and anxiety give entrance to the most irrational conceits; the faculties start from their natural tone, and then nothing so preposterous but what is appealed to and revered.

From

From circumstances such as these, the superstitious Romans, as well as all other superstitious people, have derived their divinations, their presages, their lucky and unlucky days. To enumerate the various omens of the Romans, would be to fill a volume; I will confine myself, therefore, to the mentioning a few of the many, which they deemed of a baneful complection: the starting of the eyes and eye brows of the left side, and the palpitation of the heart; the numbness of the little finger; or the starting of the thumb of the left hand; the tingling of the ear; sneezing in the morning, though in the evening it was nothing; for

She spoke: the god of love aloud
Sneez'd again, and all the croud
Of little loves, that waited by,
Bow'd, and blest'd the augury.

CATULL. CARM. 46. COWLEY.

The being overturned, or the falling of a statue ; the hitting your foot against the threshold of the door going out ; the breaking of the strings of your shoes ; being held by the robe when getting up ; the meeting, in a morning, an Ethiopian, a dwarf, an eunuch, or a man deformed ; each of these, however eager a man was in his pursuit, would be the cause of his returning home, and of his continuing in his house all day.

But besides the exhaustless fund of imbecility, which manifests the inconsistency of man, and which shews that the greatest talents may be made subservient to superstition, the Romans had their auspices and auguries, both of them taken from external objects ; and their aruspices, the result of an investigation of the animals to be sacrificed ; their entrails, and the flame, and smoke they should occasion. The character of an augur was of the highest

highest distinction; it was a priesthood for life, and so sacred in estimation, that no crime or forfeiture could efface it. Cicero was himself of the augural college, however he might have been heard to say in the words of Cato the censor, that "he could not conceive how it was possible for two augurs to meet and look at one another without laughing." The authority of augurs was excessive; the senate could not assemble except in such places as they had previously consecrated. In the assemblies of the senate, or people, a bad omen declared by them was of itself sufficient to dissolve the meeting. In the election of magistrates they had the like control.

The various abuses which such an institution introduced, must have been hurtful to the Roman state; no set of men could have been found so disinterested, but that one or the other would deviate
a little

a little from the direct road to get rid of a question unfavourable to his views, or to disappoint ambition opposed to himself, his family, or his friends. The power was too great to be trusted in any hands whatever ; it was allowable, as an instrument of government, a check being always necessary on the commonalty ; but beyond that it could not have been otherwise than pernicious, as we instance indeed in various cases ; in that of Claudius Pulcher particularly, who, before an engagement, not being able to make the chickens eat, was in danger of losing the day from so disastrous an omen. Nothing but coolness and presence of mind could have rescued him from this dilemma. Throwing the chickens into the sea, " there," says he, " if ye wont eat, the gods will be " surely satisfied that ye drink." This happily animated his men ; the alternative was a good one, it gained him the victory. " Shall I guide my mind," says

Hector

Hector to his brother Polydamas, on the latter's writing him to retreat, in consequence of an ill omen, and for the truth of which he appealed to the augurs of the army ;

— shall I guide my wav'ring mind
By wand'ring birds that flit with ev'ry wind ?
Ye vagrants of the sky your wings extend,
Or where the sun arise, or where descend ;
To right or left, unheeded take your way,
While I the dictates of high heav'n obey.
Without a sign, his sword the brave man draws,
And asks no omen but his country's cause.

ILIAD, b. xii. v. 277.

And yet these religious mummeries, properly managed, were undoubtedly to be turned to good account ; men are either to be led or driven. Hence, notwithstanding the absurdity of presages, omens, and all such puerile conceits ; to the influence of them in many instances, the Romans found themselves indebted for glory and renown. If an unlucky appearance had the effect of causing dependency,

spondency, a lucky one had, on the contrary, the pervading energy of animating the faculties to a state almost invincible. And as the generals and magistrates themselves were the expounders, it is clear how dexterously they had it in their power to play a game in which their honour and reputation were engaged.

In fact, if we reflect on the foundation on which the Romans reared their grandeur, or rather on the means by which they rendered themselves celebrated for fortitude, courage, and magnanimity, we shall find the whole to con-center in externals; auspices, triumphs, trophies, crowns, statues, and inscriptions. The most virtuous minds are pleased at being noticed by their country; not a quarter of the good that has been seen among mankind would have existed, had it not been for the seducing sense of praise; the laudable pride of acquiring and meriting
the

the approbation of the world; even imaginary rewards are flattering. The Roman, who doubted of an hereafter, was yet in rapture at the idea of funeral and monumental encomiums: he studied, above all things, to be deserving of posthumous reputation; for to be placed, though in effigy, amongst the statues of his ancestors, and there, when observed by his descendants, to be marked undeserving, was a degradation and a dishonour worse than annihilation itself. “Let my children look at the statue of their father, with love and veneration; let them but have cause to emulate his actions, and I am confident (an old Roman would say) my days have not been unworthily spent in the service of my country.”

“Of all our connections,” says Cicero, “none is more weighty, none is more dear, than that between every indivi-

“ dual and his country. What good
 “ man would hesitate to die in her ser-
 “ vice?” and with Cicero, so spoke the
 generality of his fellow citizens. As
 a people, it would be absurd to suppose
 that they were endowed with an unpa-
 ralleled degree of instinctive courage
 and resolution. Other nations exhibited
 as gallant and as striking instances of
 heroism and intrepidity; but it was ex-
 ercise and discipline which rendered the
 Romans so formidable. They were,
 moreover, constantly in the field, every
 new consul being desirous of signalizing
 himself by some military actions during
 his temporary sovereignty.

Courage, especially in war, we know to
 be artificial; and artificial bravery, so cir-
 cumstanced, is unquestionably prefera-
 ble to natural. Thus the veriest coward
 could be trained, by the Romans, to fight
 and signalize himself against the enemies
 of

of the State. It is, indeed, extraordinary, how easily we may be led or driven; we are positive machines, which, in spite of our will, are wrought into motion, and then we wonder at the novelty of our situation.

Natural valour, then, we must not suppose the Romans to have possessed in any superior degree to their neighbours. Their discipline was every thing; and particularly that part of it which imposed it as a duty on the subjects to defend their fellow citizens in their dangers, without regard to any friendship or engagements whatsoever. “In forty years that I have served,” said Siccus Dentatus, “I have fought about an hundred and twenty battles, and received forty five wounds. The rewards bestowed upon me have been fourteen civic crowns, by those I have saved in battle; one obsidional for having raised
“ a siege;

“ a siege; three mural for having first
“ mounted the enemies walls and taking
“ possession of them; and eight others
“ for my behaviour in several battles.
“ Add to these eighty golden collars, one
“ hundred and sixty bracelets of gold,
“ eighteen pike staves, and twenty five
“ rich gorgets, nine of which are the re-
“ wards of so many single combats.”

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT CIV.

CHARACTERS such as Siccus Dentatus did once exist in Rome; as did characters such as Quintus Mucius, surnamed Scævola, whose conduct, while governor of the Asiatic provinces, was so exemplary, that an anniversary festival was instituted to commemorate the happiness the people had enjoyed under his administration; but these noble instances of heroic resolution, and uncommon equity and moderation, shewed themselves only while the Republic continued healthy and in vigor. A different race of beings was afterwards produced.

Vain are their hopes, who fancy to inherit,
By trees of pedigree, or fame, or merit:
Tho' plodding heralds thro' each branch may trace
Old captains and dictators of their race ;

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While their ill lives that family belie,
And grieve the brafs which ftands difhonour'd by.

JUV. SAT. 8. STEPNY.

The once virtuous Romans, as the elegant Melmoth obferves, finking into a race of abandoned voluptuaries, became at length the worthy flaves of the moft execrable fet of tyrants that ever difgraced human nature :

Thofe fatal feeds, luxurious vices fow,
Which ever lay a mighty people low.
That age, by honeft poverty adorn'd,
Which brought the manly Romans forth, is fcorn'd:
Wherever ought pernicious does abound,
For luxury all lands are ranfack'd round,
And dear-bought deaths the finking State confound. }

LUCAN, lib. i. ROWE.

Nay, to fo intolerable a length had depravity arofe during even the government of that infinuating defpot, Auguftus, that to chaftife a flave near his ftatue or picture, was a capital crime ; as it was to have ftripped or changed one's drefs near them ;

them ; or to have carried into a defiled place, a coin, or an engraved stone with his image on it.

I shall shortly have done with the Romans. We have viewed them in their public character ; we shall now say a word or two on their domestic disposition. No nation, if we believe their annalists, ever paid greater honour to the connubial state, during, indeed, the existence of the Republic. For the purpose of multiplying the children of the empire, they not only rewarded those who married, but they levied heavy fines on those who preferred a life of celibacy. It was the prescribed question of the censor to each citizen, on numbering the tribes, " Upon
" your faith, have you a wife whereby
" to have children ?" He who had a barren wife, was obliged to repudiate her ; those who had none, paid a stipulated fine.

We have already seen the almost general dislike of the ancients to intermarry with strangers. Apprehension and pride were undoubtedly the ground-works of this repugnance. Women feared barbarity, or something worse, from husbands, whose language and customs they did not understand. Men, on their side, disliked taking to their arms the daughters of a people inferior to them in prowess or antiquity; hence the aversion to foreign connections. The Romans were of this texture of mind; but pluming themselves more extravagantly on their blood than almost any others, they forbade, under the severest penalties, marriages with strangers; they declared them baneful to government. Thus when Anthony espoused Cleopatra, he was execrated for it. That act, and the consequences of it, injured his cause more than the address, the riches, and the power of his enemies. It was flying in the face of the most obstinately-

stinately-rooted prejudices of his countrymen; it was, moreover, an introduction of Polygamy, which was not admitted by the Romans.

But notwithstanding the great estimation in which they held the institution of matrimony, it seems to be generally allowed that no country ever exhibited more profligate or licentious amours, or more lewdness and infidelity. The age of the greatest men, which was undoubtedly the Ciceronian, was the age of the greatest depravity; male and female seemed to vie with each other in excesses of debauchery. It cannot be denied, I should think, that their freedom of divorce was seductive and favourable to such practices. Where the bond is so slender as to be easily broke, either by perverseness, wantonness, or caprice, the comforts and the advantages of matrimony can never be expected.

So sacred, and so wise an institution, however irksome to some, should be as indissoluble as possible. Human nature should not be left to itself; as each individual surrenders a portion of his liberty for the security extended to him by his country, so should the subjects of the saffron-robed divinity be happy in the relinquishment of variety and unbridled gratification, for the solid and permanent delights of conjugal endearment. Bind the parties who marry with a light, but with an adamantine chain. The passion of desire is too overbearing to be tolerated; nature must be curbed, or all runs to riot and confusion.

But independent of the ease with which divorces were to be accomplished, and which was a most pernicious encouragement to dissipation, and a taste for novelty, there seems to have existed among the Romans an indelicacy which one would

would conceive repugnant to every feeling of sentiment and affection. It was, in fact, in my mind, as abominable a prostitution, as that we have seen to have been universal amongst the Greeks in the instance of lending their wives; I mean the repudiating, and again marrying the same women. For, in reality, where is the difference between transferring a wife for a night, and, by repudiating, giving her to the arms of another for a year, and at the end of it receiving her again as the partner of one's bosom? This indelicacy was too gross; it was subversive of every thing tender and refined. But to instance it: Martia, the wife of the celebrated Cato, after bearing him three children, was, at her husband's express desire, espoused to his friend Hortensius, who was without issue. Hortensius sometime afterwards died, and she then married Cato a second time.

This happened about the commencement of the civil wars between Cæsar and Pompey. Lucan mentions it,

In plain, unsolemn wife, his faith he plights,
She as she was, in funeral attire,
With all the sadness sorrow could inspire ;
With eyes dejected, with a joyless face,
She met her husband's like a soul's embrace.

LUCAN, lib. ii. ROWE.

The effects of a custom like this, upon the manners of a people, must have been hurtful. When modesty and a purity of thought are banished from the society of women, virtue and honourable principles quickly take their departure from the men ; they blossom and flourish in the same community.

We have already remarked, that the education of the Romans was greatly to be extolled. It was a wise system, calculated for the forming of generals, statesmen, and soldiers ; and it was essential

tial that it should be so, as Old Rome admitted of no hereditary honours. No man, however nobly born, could arrive at any dignity, who did not acquire it by personal merit; the grandeur of a family was its virtue; the extinction of the one was the extinction of the other.

I now come to a close of our review of the Romans: a vast variety of points, as you will observe, have been purposely omitted. I was apprehensive that the investigation might be tedious and disgusting. Every one knows the Roman story; it has employed the ablest pens. I now, therefore, shall conclude. For a few centuries, the Romans undoubtedly shewed themselves a mighty and an invincible power; they carried their dominion as far almost as they conceived the world to be habitable; they were, in fact, masters of the universe. If we credit history, their sovereignty was exercised

cised with a lenient hand; they insisted, indeed, on a pre-ordination to universal empire, but their subjects and dependents they admitted to be entitled to kindness and good offices. In the early ages of the Republic, there was an infinite simplicity in the Roman character. Towards the decline of it, an unhappy change universally took place; and such change was inevitable.

While their empire was circumscribed within tolerable limits, the laws of their government were adequate to the control of the people; but when extensive and most brilliant, though sanguinary conquests, had scarcely left them a nation to subdue, the unlimited powers, the plunder, and the riches of the magistrates of the provinces, shook the whole fabric to its foundation, and gave an entrance to faction, discord, and destruction. Consuls, pro-consuls, prætors, in short, officers

cers of every denomination, aspired to independency. The sword of justice was stained with the blood of barbarous proscription; all went to ruin. In a word, they erected their house of dominion on the sand, "and the rain descended, "and the floods came, and the winds "blew and beat upon the house, and it "fell, and great was the fall of this "mighty building."

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT CV.

WE are now arrived at the last stage of our inquiries. Those we have already made, have been respecting countries distinct and unconnected with us. We have been free, but we have endeavoured to be candid. Manners and customs, are to be praised or condemned, as they stand in the unalterable and universal scale of reason, humanity, and innocence; and not as they are consonant or repugnant to the peculiar opinions of those who decide on them. People are as various in their acts and dispositions, as countries in their climates and situations. Justice, therefore, is indiscriminately due to all; nor are modes of former ages to be hastily condemned (what we have condemned, we think we have had reason for) although a little self-

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complacency is never wanting to keep us in a superior degree of good humour with those to whom we are ourselves accustomed. I will bid adieu, therefore, to the ancients, with Horace's adieu to the elders of his day :

fairly make your will :
 You've play'd, and lov'd, and eat, and drank your fill :
 Walk sober off : before a sprightlier age
 Comes tottering on, and shoves you from the stage.
 Leave such to trifle, with more grace and ease,
 Whom folly pleases, and whose follies please.

HOR. lib. ii. ep. 2. POPE.

And now for the examination of what, from adoption, I hope I may be allowed to call our own domestic soil. Modern Europe is the field we have to range in. It abounds with materials, and it is fair they should be used. In the course of our journey, from the cold regions of the north, to the very spot where we are arrived, it has not once appeared that there is that prodigious difference in the constitutions,

tutions, dispositions, and natural endowments of the human race, which one would at first be inclined to suppose, We all, it should seem, tread nearly in the same beaten track. We emerge from barbarism to civilization, in much the same way; and when we get there, we exhibit nearly, if not in every respect, a similar character and appearance. Cultivation then, of course, is all that is required.

Were we enabled to treat of the children of Mercury and Saturn, where heat and cold must occasion eternal fluidity or condensation, we should have a task of variety assigned to us; but, in this earth of ours, where all are created alike, and where diversity is occasioned by culture, and by culture only, the catalogue of our instincts and our propensities is so undistinguishably the same, that as we judge of an individual, so we may judge of the ability of a nation, by knowing its age in society,

society, or in other words, its progress in civilization.

Mutilated as the records are, which we have referred to in the preceding fragments, and distorted and exaggerated as are the accounts, they yet have perhaps a preferable degree of authority to the historical details composed by the first Christian annalists, and continued by their successors. The arbitrary discipline of the church of Rome, aided by Anathemas, excommunications, and finally by the horrors of an inquisition, struck effectually at the root of truth when Christian practices were to be developed. The terrors of the hierarchy impressed all Catholic writers with apprehension and timidity. They were afraid to speak out. Exemplary punishment impended over free and liberal discussion — And this being the case, prudence requires that we pass over the first ages of the church.

Rome,

Rome, which we left mistress of the world, divided herself into an eastern and western empire, about the year of Christ 364. It was then she shewed herself in the most frightful colours. Conspiracies, treasons, murders, and every species of cruelty, were felt in the remotest corners of her dominions. Never did there flow a more plenteous stream of the blood of man. It was indeed a woeful spectacle. Massacres and tortures were considered as pastime. Superstition and fanaticism gave them birth, and nourished them with a fondness, detestable as it was hellish. But this was more particularly conspicuous in the eastern than in the western division of the empire. The latter was still regulated with a tenderness and attention, which afforded some little respite to the miserable and wretched.

The fourth and the fifth centuries of the Christian æra exhibited at length the

downfall of the Roman greatness. Ruthless sons of rapine, engendered in the north, burst from their hives, and covered the whole face of Italy. Bearing all before them like a mighty torrent, they penetrated to the extremity of Calabria. There they stopped, recoiled, and scattering themselves abroad, divided out that empire, which they had effectually annihilated. Goths, Huns, Vandals, Scythians, Tartars, or whatever you please to call them, thus beat down the monarchy that had usurped the supremacy of the world.

From this period to the ninth century, all Europe was a scene of confusion and disorder. It was doomed to a constant influx of barbarians, who were destitute of genius, literature, and every virtue but that of valour. Besides which, the Mohammedans and Infidels had established themselves in Spain. Ignorance had usurped the seat of learning and philo-

fophy. The little knowledge that remained, was confined to the cells of the recluse. Nobles of the first consideration were unacquainted with the rudiments of science. Even sovereigns were unable to write their names.

In such a state of society, almost all sorts of enormities may be supposed to have existed. We accordingly find, that there was no safety or protection for the lower orders of the people. Chieftains and Barons, with a paramount authority, lorded it with the hand of oppression. Plunder and robbery were their amusements. The traveller and the merchant who fell into their hands were mercilessly rifled. Those who should have been the pillars of the state, in a word, were the abettors of every thing hurtful and pernicious; and their moated and gloomy retirements, the receptacles of dishonourable booty.

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The prevalency of abuses so very injurious to the peace and welfare of the community, at length occasioned a combination among certain of the nobles, for their absolute suppression, and for the effectual relief of such unfortunate women as had been, or should be forcibly carried off by these profligate disturbers of the general repose. To the observance of this agreement the associators solemnly bound themselves by oath; and here we may date the origin of knight errantry. For

Nought is there under heaven's wide hollowness
That moves more dear compassion of mind,
Than beauty brought t' unworthy wretchedness,
Through envy's snares, or fortune's freaks unkind.

FAIRY QUEEN.

About the middle of the ninth century the schism in the Christian church took place, which established the difference of tenets and ceremonial in the Greek and Latin ritual. But long before this, the Italian, or western empire of the Romans,

had ceased to exist. In the year of Christ 476, it fell; and on its ruins arose a variety of states. The eastern continued until the year 1453, when Constantinople was sacked by the Mohammedans under Mahomet II. During the existence, however, of the empire of the Romans, but while it was perceptibly falling into decay, the foundations were laid of those several independent kingdoms which are at this day observable in Europe.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT CVI.

IN history, trifling errors may easily be accounted for; but, with respect to those of magnitude and importance, we are led by conjecture, and conjecture only, to attribute them either to design or inattention. Thus, one or the other of these causes was assuredly the occasion, why considerably more than a thousand years had elapsed, from the establishment of Christianity, before the precise time of the birth of our Saviour was ascertained. Abbé Denis the Little of France, first calculated this awful epocha, in the year 532. But he was mistaken in his data. He led, however, Europe for a while. Other calculators then presented themselves; all positive, but all differing. It

was not, in short, until the year 748,—and after upwards of an hundred authors had advanced contrary opinions upon the subject, that the computation of time from the birth of Christ began to be used in history.

This appearance of the Messiah upon earth, his circumcision and interment, are great and momentous æras in the annals of modern Europe. It has already been observed, that the first crusade to the Holy Land began in the year of Christ 1096. The madness of these contests, in which lives innumerable were lost, was scarcely at an end, when a more dastardly phrenzy seized upon the professors of Christianity. This was the destruction of the Jews. Mohammedans they put to death, for possessing themselves of the sacred sepulchre: Israelites they empaled, because their fathers had been the persecutors of the Son of God. In no country
did

did ever any thing so barbarous appear. All Germany streamed with blood. Bavaria alone offered up twelve thousand unhappy wretches. But, the taking of Jerusalem in 1099, exhibited the most dreadful spectacle. Every creature in it was put to the sword; neither age nor sex met with commiseration. The soldiery, as they stiled themselves, of Jesus Christ, butchered, without mercy, even infants clinging to the breast. Hapless mothers were forced to behold their children dashed against the stones. No pity was shewn; all was indiscriminate murder and destruction. And yet, these triumphant warriors, as it has been feelingly remarked, glutted with slaughter, would throw aside their arms streaming with blood, and approaching with naked feet and bended knee to the sepulchre of the prince of peace, would sing anthems to that Redeemer, who had purchased their salvation by his death; and while dead to the calamities

of their fellow creatures, would dissolve in tears for the sufferings of the Messiah.

The land of Judea, which was the theatre of many of these atrocious acts, and which, by the crusades, as well as by the wars of the Israelites themselves, was fated to every public calamity, is of inconsiderable extent. It is not more than one hundred and fifty miles in length, and not above eighty in breadth. Palestine and Phœnicia are distinct countries. Palestine, indeed, was also inhabited by Jews. This, however, is of no consequence. Excepting what we can gather from sacred writ, (the histories of other civilized people being silent on the subject) and what we can select from the effusions of Josephus's imagination, there is nothing that can lead us to a knowledge of this nation. Most marvellous things are told of them it is certain: yet their country was but small; and their divisions,

fions and sub-divisions into kingdoms, could surely be neither conducive to prowess or good government. Joshua defeated thirty-one of their sovereigns. Adoni-zedeck, who ruled a little after him at Jerusalem, confesses the destruction of threescore and ten. Now, may it not be asked, what could the extent, or what could the consideration of the dominions of such potentates be? But the ground we tread upon is hallowed. We must be guarded.

The face of both Palestine and Judea is rocky and barren. It appears as if it never could have admitted of extraordinary cultivation: on the contrary, it bears evident marks of having been visited by earthquakes and such like disasters. But, notwithstanding this, both Palestine and Judea have each of them been blessed with peculiar instances of the divine favour. They have ever been a sacred and a holy land, however
short-

short-sighted and ungrateful their inhabitants. Certain soils are favourable to certain religious superstitions. We have already remarked this. Nor can any one of them be more aptly instanced than that of which we are now treating. But it is not my business, nor indeed would it be proper for me to use too great a freedom with the Jews. Their own story speaks with a multitude of tongues; I wish here only to take notice of an observation of Mr. Maundrele, who travelled through the Holy Land not many years ago. "It is somewhat remarkable," says this gentleman, that almost every thing represented to be done in the gospel, is said by the people, who shew the places, to be done in caves. Thus, the birth of the Virgin Mary, of the annunciation, of Mary's salutation to Elizabeth, of the nativity of Christ, and John the Baptist, the transfiguration, St. Peter's

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“repentance, all were transacted, by their
“account, under ground.”

In the midst of all the horrors of intolerance, in the first ages of Christianity, we have examples of steadiness and resolution which cannot fail to affect our minds with an unbounded degree of admiration. Women, as well as men, were seen to rise beyond the supposed strength of nature and humanity. What so great as the conduct of the consort of St. Louis of France? Attendant on her husband in the Holy Land, and closely besieged in a fortress, not conceived tenable, she conjured the Sieur Joinville, as he revered that chivalry which he professed, and even bound him by an oath, instantly to put her to death should the place be surrendered, and her honour and reputation be endangered. Happily, the Sieur Joinville had no occasion to carry his promise into execution.

Could

Could any thing be nobler than this pre-determined dignity and courage? Lucretia, indeed, we read a great deal of; and her doom, ill-fated maiden, was a dreadful one. But, in despite of all the commiserating pages which have been dedicated to her virtue and her memory, and notwithstanding all her deservedly-celebrated fortitude of mind, the impulse of passion and grief which instantaneously hurried her to the bloody tragedy she acted, was not surely superior, if it can even be admitted to have been equal, to the calm and deliberate spirit and purity of the wife of Louis.

But the intrepidity of the nuns of Acra was still more heroic. These unfortunate young women, of the first families among the Christians, were here secluded in peace and tranquillity. But the turks coming before the place, besieged it with such vigour and success, that it was carried by storm

storm in the year 1291. The Abbess of the convent, as their historian says, dreading lest she and her nuns should be treated as is usual in such cases, assembled them, and exhorting them to mangle their faces, as the only means of preserving their virginity, instantly, with an heroic courage, set them the example, which the nuns boldly followed, by cutting off their noses, and disfiguring their faces in such a manner, as rendered them more adapted to excite horror than desire. Hence the soldiers, soon after breaking into the convent, were so disappointed at seeing, instead of a number of blooming beauties, such dismal objects, that they cruelly put them to the sword.

Fierce as the struggle was between the Christians and the Mohammedans for this insignificant spot of land, and ruinous as the expence of blood and treasure was to the respective sects, it was not till some

ages

ages had rolled over their heads, that it appeared eligible to desist from the cru-
sades. The Christians were sovereigns of
Jerusalem for no longer a period than
eighty-eight years, during which time,
nine kings were elevated to the throne.
It was taken from the Sultan of Egypt
in the year of Christ 1099, and was re-
taken by Saladin, Sultan of Syria, in 1187.

Of all the extraordinary instances of
fanaticism, produced in the days of which
we are speaking, none was so diabolical in
its nature, as the society of the Old Man
of the Mountain. Ingenious men have
traced the progress of those infernals in
human shape, from the sect of the Mo-
hammedan Carmathians in Persia, to their
settlement in Syria, and the mountains
of Lebanon. The head of these mur-
derers was considered by his subjects as
invested with the will and omnipotence of
God. They desired no other sanction for
the

the perpetration of the most atrocious deeds, than his all-powerful word. The fiat given, and they scattered themselves to the remotest corners of the earth. Bending their manners, and even the externals of their religion, to their bloody purposes. They assumed every shape—they stabbed under every disguise.

The Sheick, or as we best know him by the name of the Old Man of the Mountain, kept his residence on the mountain of Lebanon. His territory extended from the borders of Antioch to Damascus. The founder of his tribe, was a Mohammedan by birth—But his creed was a compound of mere mortal fabrication; it was a tissue the most heterogeneous and absurd. It made him, however, more absolute than the favourite of Allah himself. Mohammed never held the souls of his followers in such positive captivity. The duration of this people, the scourges of the

the

the earth as they were denominated, was considerable. They at length received a blow from the Mongul Tartars, in the 655th of the Heigira, or 1254th of Christ, and were finally crushed by the Egyptians in 1272.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT CVII.

FROM among the enthusiasts who visited the Holy Land during the crusades, or from among those who were devoted to that promised soil, sprang the three famous orders of religious knighthood, the Templars, Hospitallers, and Teutonics. Those of the original institution of Templars, are said to have been Monks, who, on the taking of Jerusalem, dedicated themselves as residuary defenders of the Holy Sepulchre, and as the protectors of Christians of every denomination. The Knights Templars were the first of these orders, and they were instituted in the year 1118; the others were considerably later.

Europe, as we have already noticed, continued for many centuries after the fall of the Roman empire, in the grossest uncultivation and rudeness. No such thing as polity or government was to be met with; all was anarchy; each man revenged his quarrels himself; Barons fought with Barons; and, aided by their vassals, waged formidable war. In short, nothing could surpass the lawless conduct of the nobles, or the barbarous vassalage of the people. Maximilian I. at length gave "the constitution of public and perpetual peace," at the Diet of Worms, in 1495; and he was the first who enabled the Germans (the greatest of the nations of Europe, and the successors, according to their own account, of the empire of the Cæsars) to look upon themselves as a civilized people.

But here I am obliged to go back, and from necessity, for it is with a melancholy

choly heart I do it, am compelled to touch upon a subject the most horrible of any that hath come before us, or that ever was conceived by the mind of man ; I mean the Inquisition. This terrible court, erected on the foulest and most impious foundation, and teeming with hellish and damnable persecution, was instituted in the year of the Saviour of mankind, 1204, on account of some tumults occasioned by the Albigenſes. It was the first institution which gave a mortal wound to the privileges of humanity, and to all the affections of our nature. The ſon here accused his father ; the father informed againſt his children ; the wife arraigned her husband ; and thus ruin triumphed through a bigoted and miſtaken zeal. What ſpecies of information was not received and admitted ? A ſimple ſuppoſition was ſufficient to occaſion the imprisonment of the helpless and innocent ; the accuſer was not con-

fronted with the accused; nor, though false in his accusation, had he any thing to fear, for he was concealed under a cloud of eternal oblivion. Even flight, the sole refuge of the persecuted, was deemed declaratory of guilt. Anathemas followed the devoted while seeking refuge from the storm. Excommunication rendered them the outcasts of society.—Hence friends were lost to friends; sons were lost to fathers; husbands were lost to wives. In a word, the hand that would plunge a dagger into the hearts of such branded wretches as fell under the lash of the Inquisition, was the child of grace, the favoured child of that merciful Father who is in heaven.

But let not assertion be the sole proof of the barbarous inhumanity of the Inquisition. Let the words of the manifesto published by the States of the Netherlands in 1566, speak what it was,

was, even so late as the sixteenth century.
 "A tribunal," recites the manifesto,
 "which is not only contrary to all hu-
 "man and divine laws, but which ex-
 "ceeds in cruelty the most barbarous in-
 "stitutions of the most savage tyrants in
 "the heathen world; which reduces all
 "men to a state of miserable slavery, and
 "exposes the best to continual apprehen-
 "sion; so that if a priest, or wicked
 "minion of power shall incline, he may
 "accuse any man, however innocent,
 "and cause him to be imprisoned, con-
 "demned, and put to death, without be-
 "ing confronted with his accusers, and
 "without being allowed to bring evidence
 "of his innocence, or to speak in his
 "defence."

O man! thou art surely the greatest
 curse, as thou unquestionably art the
 greatest blessing to man. Not all the ca-
 lamities which have afflicted the world,

taken collectively, can equal the destruction occasioned by their own means. —Plague, pestilence, and famine, are trifles to these; thou art the hydra of desolation. Mademoiselle d'Aunois, in her memoirs of the court of Spain, says, “ Among the Jews that were burnt at an
 “ auto de fé, or an act of faith, there
 “ was a girl, seemingly not seventeen
 “ years of age, who standing on that
 “ side where the Queen was, petitioned
 “ her for pardon.” She was wonderfully pretty, and she said to her, “ Great
 “ Queen, will not your royal presence
 “ make some alteration in my misfor-
 “ tunes? Consider how young I am,
 “ and that I am to suffer for a religion
 “ which I have been cherished in from
 “ my birth!

—— here the swelling sigh,
 And pearly tear-drop rushing in her eye,
 As morning dew hangs trembling on the rose,
 Though fond to speak, her farther speech oppose.

LESLIE, p. 60.

“ The

“The Queen turned away her eyes and
“seemed to be moved with pity towards
“her; yet she could not, she dared not
“so much as mention the saving her.”

What a spectacle for sovereigns to be present at! What a tragedy for the first nobility to take part in! No man in those days, Spain not exclusively, thought it beneath him to assist as an executioner. Wriothesley, the High Chancellor of England, we are told, directed a young and beautiful woman to be stretched on the rack, because she differed with him on the real presence. With his own arm he tore her body asunder, and then caused her limbs to be committed to the flames:

——— O man, proud man,
Drest in a little brief authority,
(Most ignorant of what he's most assur'd,)
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heav'n,
As make the angels weep.

SHAKESPEARE.

In the reign of the Emperor Charles V:
upwards of fifty thousand of his subjects

were put to death on account of their religious principles. Philip II. his son, more intolerant than his father, ordained, that whoever taught heretical doctrines should, if men, be put to death by the sword; if women, be buried alive. But their more execrable representative and General, Alva, going beyond them both, boasted, that during his five years administration in the Low Countries, he had caused more than eighteen thousand Protestants to be publicly executed,

The Inquisition, however, and the barbarous persecution of the Jews, did not appear in every country alike. England, for instance, although she had a High Court, and a Star Chamber, had not an Inquisition. In France, it had very little to do after the heresy of the Albigenes was extinguished, until the Reformation. Then it blazed abroad afresh, and continued with accumulating vigour, until the
year

year 1645, when the never-to-be-forgotten Charles de Montchal, archbishop of Thoulouse, had the virtue and the hardiness to attack and crush it, by an arret of the king. And this too, where it was most strongly intrenched, in his own diocese, where it had originated. The same blessed extinction befel it in other divisions of Europe. But the evil is not entirely eradicated. Spain and Portugal still continue to bend their necks to the barbarous imposition. The latter, indeed, had abolished it; but it has again, as a pent-up volcano, burst into a flame. O that with an angel's voice, I could thunder in the ears of those infatuated children of perverted Christianity—"Refrain from religious persecution! Reflect you not on the enormity of such transgression? Your God spake to you—be tolerant and charitably minded. Why will you not tread in the steps of kindness and humanity? And you, ye priests,"

—Ye

————— Ye rev'rend fathers,
 Whose beards the silver hand of time has touch'd,
 Whose learning, and good letters, peace has tutor'd,
 Whose white investments figure innocence;
 ————— Who shal! believe,
 But ye misuse the rev'rence of your place,
 Under the counterfeited zeal of God,
 In deeds most damnable?

SHAKESPEARE.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT CVIII.

EVERY institution in the first ages of the Christian church, and indeed for many ages afterwards, derived its authority from the unbounded and admitted pretensions of the Popes to dominion. The Pope of Rome, if we subscribe to the synodical interpretations of the Holy Scriptures, was the visible head of the Christian church, and had received (if not immediately from Jesus Christ, at least from St. Peter) the Holy Ghost, the order of priesthood, and the power of opening and shutting the gates of heaven; with the farther essential prerogative, of transmitting those heavenly endowments to his successors in the papacy. "And
 " the Lord said unto Peter, I will give
 " thee

“ thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven,
 “ and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth,
 “ shall be bound in heaven ; and whatso-
 “ ever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be
 “ loosed in heaven.” And hence his com-
 mission.

Besides this, Sylvester found it would be convenient to have certain comfortable resources in his possession, which in the event of necessity, might enable him to support his supremacy ; and accordingly he is said to have forged a donation from the Emperor Constantine, which invested him and the successors of Saint Peter with the city of Rome, and all the provinces, places, and towns of Italy. He left likewise in pretension to his heirs, a rank superior to every sovereign upon earth. Even the Cardinals of the hierarchy were afterwards to be considered, in rank, as upon an equality with Kings. But the most sublime and illustrious of the inherencies

rencies in the Pope, the Prince of Priests, the Vicegerent of the Emperor of heaven, consisted in the canonization of those whose virtues entitled them to an exalted situation in Paradise, and in the clemency of heaven, which he could extend to the wicked at pleasure.

Chimerical and ludicrous as all claims to infallibility and universal jurisdiction may be deemed, and profane and unchristian-like as all the divine inheritance pretended to by the Popes may be considered, they were undoubtedly the causes which operated to the permanency of the papal supremacy. Nor should such circumstances be deemed unworthy of admiration; for in fact, they are as wise and as solid, so far as they merely concern empire, as are the pretensions of any other power; and what would become of the claims of the different governments of the world, were they

they to be tried upon the principles of equity and justice?

Are the ancient Romans to be celebrated for their conquest of the earth; and are the modern Romans to be reprobated, because in a less blustering, though in a more effectual display of political abilities, they have shewn themselves capable of erecting a more formidable authority? For my own part, the net which was thrown by the successors of the fisherman over the consciences of mankind, was so strong, and binding in its construction; that I must confess myself inclinable to give the hierarchy as much credit as the republic. The slow, but sure workings of the understanding, are indisputably as worthy of commendation, as the impetuous, but bloody reputation, that is consequent on war.

In

In all ecclesiastical matters, the decisions of the Pope were received as the infallible decisions of the Divinity. But, the holy fathers were not content with the superintendence and regulation of all sacred affairs, they boldly extended their interference to the domestic arrangements; the manners and customs of every people under the denomination of Christians. Crowns they disposed of at their will. They dethroned sovereigns. They absolved subjects from their allegiance. They even laid whole kingdoms under interdiction. So that there was not, as it is alledged, a throne which they had not shaken, nor a prince who did not shudder at their power.

Francis I. when Pope Alexander VI. in 1493, gave the eastern and western empires to the Spaniards and Portuguese, finding himself shut out, demanded a sight of Adam's last will and testament, that

that he might see the cause, why a King of France should be excluded from those hemispheres. But Francis was a liberal-minded man. Sovereigns who had lived before him, and many who appeared afterwards in Europe, manifested less regard to the dignity of their characters. It will scarcely be believed, but it is a fact authenticated in history, that an Emperor of Germany was obliged to appear at the gate of the holy Pontiff, and to stand there bare footed for three days, as a suppliant, praying for mercy and forgiveness. Nay, it is recorded, that one of the Popes insolently set his foot on the head of an Emperor whilst he was kissing his slipper, and kicked off his crown, to shew that it was in his power to take it from him when he pleased. Thus omnipotent was he! His nod, like unto that of Jove, or more properly like that of the sovereign of the Natchez, was such, that every morning he might have strutted from his
palace,

palace, beckoned to the sun, bid him smoke his pipe, and then indicated to him with his finger, the course he would have him steer, until the evening should descend.

What was there to which the multitude of Christians would not have acceded? Did not they almost adore their sovereign Pontiff? Did not they admit of his possessing supernatural gifts, and heavenly endowments? Did not they offer incense to him? Did not they prostrate themselves before him, as the children of Israel did before the Calf? Did not they humbly kiss his toe? a custom, by the way, borrowed as probably from their progenitors in Caligula's time, who introduced at Rome, the custom of kissing the slipper, as from the text of scripture which runs, "And Christ said, see'st thou
 "this woman? she hath washed my feet
 "with tears, and wiped them with the
 VOL. III. Q " hairs

"hairs of her head, but thou hast given
 "me no water for my feet. Thou gavest
 "me no kifs, but this woman, since the
 "time I came, hath not ceased to kifs
 "my feet." In a word, during the vi-
 gour and paramount control of the hier-
 archy, did the followers of Christ manifest
 less superstition and extravagancy than the
 Heathens of whom we have recently been
 treating? Or, to go a step farther, did any
 of the celebrated characters of antiquity
 seriously give themselves up to such posi-
 tive insanity?

Rabelais, it is said, could never be pre-
 vailed on, while he was at Rome, to ac-
 company the Ambassador to an audience
 with the Pope. The Ambassador one day
 asked him his reason for it. He replied,
 "I have an insuperable aversion to bad
 "smells. Your Excellency, the repre-
 "sentative of a great monarch, is un-
 "der the necessity of kissing the Pope's
 "toe.

“ toe. Now, if such be your lot, what
 “ must be mine, who am but a poor phy-
 “ sician. Doubtless I shall be obliged to
 “ kiss his nether end.”

Q 2 FRAG-

FRAGMENT CIX.

IT was solemnly decreed, in the famous Bull Unam Sanctam, “to be an article “of faith necessary to salvation, to believe, that every human creature was “subject to the Pope.” A Romish writer of eminence, asserts “a priest to be as “much above a king, as a man is above “a beast.” Nay, Bellarmine, in order to cut the matter short, pithily concludes, “that if a Pope should enjoin vices, and “forbid virtues, the Christian church “would be obliged to believe vices good, “and virtues evil, or it would sin against “conscience.”

The tiara, since the days of Peter, has graced the brows of upwards of two hundred

dred and fifty sovereign Pontiffs. Many of them monsters, many of them men of exemplary piety and virtue. All, however, steady and persevering in the increase of the papal infallibility. Sacred matters, when dominion is in question, will always take the lead of temporal. But no authority is so formidable or binding, as that wherein they assist, and mutually support each other. Religion in every country has furnished the proof. Penetration, wisdom, and sagacity, have never been so effectual in their workings, as when cloathed under the appearances of piety, humanity, and grace.

But the holy spirit, was not exclusively and necessarily confined to the person of the Pope himself. It was transferable. Any man might procure it by special commission. Every council and assembly of the dignified clergy had it, from the nature of their profession. Hence secta-

ries, from the efficiency of divine inspiration, exhibited a second confusion of tongues. They opposed, they reviled, and they damned one another. Each laid claim to extraordinary prerogatives. They all boasted of the influence of the Holy Ghost. They all, in their turns, became branded as preachers of the suggestions of the devil. The councils, thus, though they were as contradictory in their decrees as any other councils whatever, were always deemed infallible. The canons, repugnant as they might be to gospel, morality, and wisdom, were never considered otherwise than as the effusions of the Holy Spirit. God inspired and dictated the ordinances of his favourite church.

A wag, indeed, said, during the sitting of the council of Trent, that the Holy Spirit arrived to certain of the assembly every day, in the cloak-bag of the postilion,

lion, who came from Versailles. This we must suppose impossible. For goodness, if I may be allowed so to express myself, must certainly have superabounded in the elect of the middle ages of Christianity. The proofs are without number: so much so, that out of the aggregate stock of the good works of the saints, which were over and above what was necessary for their own salvation, and which was formed into a grand despot, the Popes (Urban I., I believe, began it) had a free and an unlimited credit. Their drafts were unhesitatingly honoured. The bill-holder having nothing else to do than to settle the rate of exchange, it being at some times, personal, as during the crusades; at other times pecuniary, as when the pontifical treasury was ebbing rather fast.

Besides this exhaustless bank of the good works of the saints, the keys that

were committed to St. Peter, and by him to his successors in the vicarage, were a means of conferring innumerable blessings on the world. To open the gates of heaven to the miserable sinner, was to raise the weak hearted—and to open to the rays of hope the minds of the foully-tainted multitude. A simple indulgence contained the whole. It was moreover, cheap, and easily to be procured. The form of that granted by Tetzel in the sixteenth century, and quoted by an elegant historian, runs thus : “ May our
 “ Lord Jesus Christ have mercy upon thee,
 “ and absolve thee by the merits of his most
 “ holy passion. And I, by his authority,
 “ that of his blessed apostles Peter and
 “ Paul, and of the most holy Pope,
 “ granted and committed to me in these
 “ parts, do absolve thee, first from all
 “ ecclesiastical censures, in whatever manner they have been incurred ; and then
 “ from all thy sins, transgressions, and
 “ excesses,

“excesses, how enormous soever they
 “may be, even from such as are reserved
 “for the cognizance of the holy see, and
 “as far as the keys of the holy church
 “extend. I remit to you all punish-
 “ment which you discover in Purgatory
 “on their account, and I restore you to
 “the holy sacraments of the church, to
 “the unity of the faithful, and to that
 “innocence and purity which you pos-
 “sessed at baptism; so that when you
 “die, the gates of punishment shall be
 “shut, and the gates of the Paradise of
 “Delight shall be opened; and if you
 “shall not die at present, this grace shall
 “remain in full force at the point of
 “death. In the name of the Father,
 “and of the Son, and of the Holy
 “Ghost.”

The same celebrated writer then selects
 some passages from Luther, which paint
 in the most glowing colours the doctrines
 of

of Tetzels and his associates on the subject of indulgencies. "If any man (say they) purchase letters of indulgence, his soul may rest secure, with respect to its salvation. The souls confined in Purgatory, for whose redemption indulgencies are purchased, as soon as the money tinkles in the chest, instantly escape from that place of torment, and ascend into heaven. The efficacy of indulgence is so great, that the most heinous sins, even if one should violate (which is impossible) the mother of God, shall be remitted and expiated by them, and the person be freed both from punishment and guilt. Indulgence is the unspeakable gift of God, given to reconcile man to himself. Nor is the cross erected by the preachers of indulgencies, less efficacious than the cross of Christ itself. Lo! the heavens are open; if you enter not now, when will you enter? For twelve pence, you may redeem the soul of your father out of Purgatory; and
are

are you so ungrateful, that you will not rescue your parent from torment? If you had but one coat, you should strip yourself and sell it, in order to purchase such benefits."

To read of impositions so enormous and so flagitious as the above, and to consider that all modern Europe was at one time pervaded by an implicit belief of their efficacy and truth, is most humiliating to sense, and most shocking to Christianity. When we reflect on it, what have you, ye proud Christians, so greatly to boast of? Two centuries are scarcely past, since ye were plunged in this ignominious blindness; a blindness more fatally pernicious than all the idolatry of the heathens. What an encourager, what a prolific parent of infamy and vice! But I will avoid bearing hard even on wickedness so abominable, lest my intention should be mistaken. My
blood

blood, I own, boils within me with indignation. I blush when I reflect, how little more than the name of Christians the children of a free religion had to shew, of all that had been graciously bequeathed to them by their Saviour!

Cupidity was the over-ruling passion of the priesthood; they extorted from the people the whole that they possessed; they made them, one would think, believe, that avarice was a first attribute of the Divinity; and that the saints made a traffic of their influence and protection. "It is true," says Clovis, "St. Martin serves his friends with zeal; but between you and I, he makes them pay roundly for his trouble." Indeed so surcharged were they with the good things of this world, that your First Richard, in a lively moment, commended his pride to the Templars, his avarice to
the

the Benedictines, and his voluptuousness to his good lords the bishops.

The text of scripture which runs, “and
 “Jesus breathed on his disciples and
 “said, receive ye the Holy Ghost—whose-
 “ever sins ye remit, they are remitted
 “unto them; and whosoever sins ye
 “retain, they are retained,” most proba-
 bly invested the Popes not only with the
 delusive imposition of indulgence, which
 exalted their power and character in the
 eyes of the world, and the wicked, which
 latter are always the most superstitious;
 but likewise with those instruments of
 punishment, anathemas, and excommuni-
 cations, which dragged the most mighty
 under their feet, and thereby consolidated
 their authority.

Excommunications were common; the
 persons so cursed were not only cut off
 from the benefits of all communion with
 the

the holy mysteries of their religion, but were also excluded from all human society; levelled with the beasts, delivered into the power of their enemies, and often condemned to temporal fire in this world, and to that which is eternal in the next. "May the wrath of God," says Clement VI. in a bull of excommunication, fulminated against the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, "and of St. Peter and St. Paul, crush him in this world, and that which is to come! May the earth open and swallow him alive; may his memory perish, and all the elements be his enemies! And may his children fall into the hands of his adversaries, even in the sight of their father!"

These, not very favourable traits, with various others which might be adduced, manifest the little efficacy of Christianity on the minds of those of the Romish persuasion during the times of which I am speaking.

speaking. Nothing was less discernible in the Christian character than charity, mildness, and humanity. The whole conduct of human affairs was stamped with ferociousness and barbarity. "We declare thy wife a widow," said a ban of the empire, "thy children orphans, and send thee, in the name of the devil, to the four corners of the earth." The Emperor, Baldwin, in the thirteenth century, being taken prisoner, had his legs and arms cut off, and was left a prey to the wild beasts. Jornandi, of the house of the Norman Princes, was tied naked on a chain of red hot iron, and crowned with a circle of the same burning metal which was nailed to his head.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT CX.

THE wisdom and goodness of God pointed out activity, as being not only essentially necessary to the preservation of the corporeal faculties, but as being eminently requisite to mental health and the virtues of the mind. Man was never ordained to prey upon himself, and feed on thought. Goodness is a relative quality; it is only useful when displayed in action. Theoretic, barren speculations, are repugnant to every thing social and agreeable; and when joined to monastic, cloistered contemplations, they are even adverse to the scriptural doctrines of Christianity; but if such be blamable, what shall we say of the visionaries who seek the road to heaven through mortifications, penances,

PHILOSOPHICAL RHAPSODIES. 243

res, and personal chastisements? What an amazing catalogue of fanaticks lies before us! It is scarcely to be credited.

One Simeon Stilites, say *Les Lettres Juifs*, who flourished in the fifth century, lived forty years erect upon a pillar like a statue, and had no way to ease himself, but the same privileges which geese have, that stand sometimes on one foot, and sometimes on another. Before he was displaced, he was invocated for a pain in the hams. St. Dunstan amused himself with the devil, whom he could manage as he pleased; and one day, as the said infernal spirit went to take some liberty with him, he seized him by the nose with a pair of tongs, and chastised him to such a degree, that the devil would have no more to do with him. Various, and as ridiculous things are told of St. Anthony's temptations in the wilderness, and St. Dominic amusing himself with burning the

devil's claws with a flambeau. We have it on record, that St. Hilarian was content with only four figs a day, and that after fun set; that St. Dorothy the Theban never lay down; that St. Guingulvis made two hundred genuflections a day; that St. Paul, the Anchoret, prayed three hundred times a day; that St. Polychron said his prayers with the root of a great oak upon his shoulders; that St. Baradat and St. Thalella bent themselves quite double in a cage upon the point of a rock, and that St. Anthelmus gave himself a thousand lashes a day.

Now all these, and an hundred equally extravagant things, are to be picked out of the lives of the Saints (mark they were Saints) of Christianity. As many more, I know, could have been selected from the superstitious nations of whom we have been treating, particularly the Hindoos and Mohammedans; but the bringing

bringing so extravagant, though universal, an insanity home to the children of Christianity, was the purpose at which I aimed; and my reason was, the unavoidable reflection which it must inculcate, that customs and manners, as well as religious modes of action, are not more ridiculous in one people, than they probably may be in another; and that temper, candour, and indulgence, are therefore highly essential, in comparatively reviewing the different nations of the earth. A lively Poet says,

A Fackeer, (a religion well known in the east
Not much like a parson, still less like a priest)
With no canting, nor sly jesuitical arts,
Field-preaching, hypocrisy, learning, or parts;
By a happy refinement in mortification,
Grew the oracle saint, and the pope of his nation.
But what did he do, this esteem to acquire,
Did he torture his head or his bosom with fire?
Was his neck in a portable pillory cas'd?
Did he fasten a chain to his leg or his waist?
No; his holiness rose to this sovereign pitch,
By the merit of running long nails in his breech.

CAMBRIDGE.

The severity of penance, and the mortifications to which visionaries abandon themselves, are surely indications of a disturbed imagination; of an inclination to impose, or of a capriciousness scarcely to be defined. Can it ever occur to a rational being, that God can be pleased with the sight of stripes and flagellations? That he can have satisfaction in beholding us refuse the comforts and the blessings he has given us to enjoy? That to serve him we must neglect our fellow creatures, and so save our souls that we must destroy our bodies? These are all abominable conclusions, counter in the extreme, to the unbounded goodness of the majesty of heaven.

Is it material, or is it consonant to any one principle of reason, that the garb, the food, the spot, should be of consequence to a man, whose soul overflows with grateful unaffected piety and thanksgiving?

giving? Believe me the idea is an impious one. Religion and wisdom both say, virtue is best recommended by example; and that he is the really good man who has courage to practice it in open day. God delights to see his creatures happy; wherefore it is imprinted on every human breast that

Wisdom, tho' richer than Peruvian mines,
And sweeter than the sweet ambrosial hive,
What is she but the means of happiness?
That unobtain'd, than folly more a fool;
A melancholy fool without her bells.

YOUNG, n. ii. v. 458.

But to so outrageous a renunciation of every pleasurable gratification in this life did the Catholic persuasion entice its votaries, that though Christ himself cursed a fig tree because it was barren, they yet recommended to both man and woman rigid and perpetual continency. They did not, indeed, establish a criminality in marriage, but they did what was nearly

the same thing, they extolled and declared virginity to be a virtue.

The Mohammedans, of whom we have already spoke, were early trained to an acquiescence in certain cruel and extraordinary actions. But, if Mohammedans could be deemed wrong, in depriving unhappily devoted men of the powers of generation ; and in consequence of licentiousness or jealousy, if they immured their females in the Zunnana ; can they be looked upon as more culpable than the Christians, who enjoin a life of celibacy to the priesthood, and who cloister up their virgins, as if they were inanimate as the shrines at which they are forced to kneel ? All God's creatures were designed to propagate their kind. Every part of animated, nay of vegetable nature, demonstrates it to our senses. Is the human species alone to frustrate the ends of its creation ? Are man and woman, only, of those

those who breathe the breath of life, to be doomed to an unenjoined, unnatural mortification, and that from a fallacious exposition of a text of scripture? The Abbé Fleury, in his Ecclesiastical History, says, that in the one city of Oxyrinchus in Lower Egypt, there were twenty thousand consecrated virgins, and ten thousand monks. Shall we read this, and then wholly condemn the disciples of the Koran for destroying the sexual distinction of man, while we pass over with tenderness, if not with entire approbation, the Catholic seclusion of those who were declaredly made for the comfort and solace of each other? The absurdity is glaring.

Among the Christians, says the sagacious and learned Montesquieu in his *Lettres Persiennes*, the priests and dervises of both sexes, who devote themselves to perpetual continence, have acquired the virtue of virtues, though I cannot comprehend

any virtue, not knowing how that can be a virtue, which is productive of nothing. I find their doctors plainly contradicting themselves, when they say, that marriage is holy, and that celibacy, which is opposite to it, is more holy. This practice of continence hath been the loss of more men, than ever have been destroyed by the plague, or the most bloody wars. We see in every religious house, an endless family, where nobody is born, and which is maintained at the expence of every body else. These houses are always open, like so many pits, wherein future generations are buried alive.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT CXI.

THE holy and beatified St. Chrysostom, calls a life of celibacy, "a life
 "worthy of heaven : not inferior to that
 "of angels." A young lady of England
 speaks of it more naturally, and so entirely
 to the purpose, that I would to heaven
 her sentiments were inscribed in letters of
 gold, over the portal of every cloister and
 monastery in christendom.

To retire from the crowd,
 And make ourselves good,
 By avoiding of ev'ry temptation ;
 Is in truth to reveal,
 What we'd better conceal,
 That our passions want some regulation.
 It will much more rebound
 To our praise, to be found,
 In a world so abounding with evil,
 Unspotted and pure,
 Though not so demure,
 As to wage open war with the devil.

In

In delivering my sentiments thus freely on religious houses, I am far from desiring to be considered as of the number of those who have a malignant satisfaction in holding them up as sinks of turpitude and corruption. I level only at the institutions. The brothers and the sisters of those holy places I can readily believe to be as charitable, virtuous, and kind-hearted, as any people upon earth :

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark, unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flow'r is born to bloom unseen,
And waste its fragrance on the desert air.

I only lament their situation. I think it a cruel one to themselves, a pernicious one to society, and in every respect repugnant to the will and doctrine of our Saviour.

But religious societies are growing into disuse. Russia has already established a

law that no male shall become a monk, till he is turned of thirty ; and no female a nun, till she is fifty ; and even then, not without express permission from their superiors.

While I admit, however, of piety and good actions in the convents and monasteries, I yet cannot refrain from animadverting on that extraordinary custom, which took its rise among the chaste and undefiled priesthood, the custom of confessing, and directing the consciences of the laity. The religion of a country, whether revealed or imposed, is a subject of the most delicate texture. It should be handled with diffidence, and circumspection. But its excrescencies should at all reasonable moments be lopped off. Admitting this evident necessity, (and who can deny it) it follows of course, that an alien regulator, a spiritual guide in a family, is a baneful infringement of
that

that wholesome authority, which the head of it should invariably possess. Can it be rationally imagined, that priests are compounded of different materials from those of ordinary men? Have they not the same passions and desires? Does the blood in their veins circulate less riotously than in ours? Priests, however they may enjoin abstinence to others, are not the most cruel mortifiers of the flesh themselves. They love, as other men, good living: And good living naturally creates propensities, which are not always to be kept in subjection. God forbid that I should be supposed the accuser of the pastors of the flock. I speak of them merely as men: men frail and liable to error. I speak likewise of them, as I look upon the situation in which they are placed, as confessors, hazardous and inimical to virtue. How few are there, in this world, of the sexes, who unallied can trust themselves in an unrestrained intercourse of communication?

nitiation? The weaknesses to which we are liable, are dangerous, and easily to be laid hold of. It is not prudent to be too confident in our strength.

Women assuredly run great risks, in giving up the direction of their actions to those of the other sex, who are the depositaries of their secrets, and who have unbounded freedom in the administering of advice, punishment, or consolation. No temptation can be more seductive, than that wherein the crime can be pardoned by the criminal. But, independent of the women, the authority of the men is greatly shaken by this foreign influence. The veneration and respect which are due to the father of a family, are by this means transferred. Domestic government is entirely at an end, for it is a self-evident truth, that people seldom consider any other than those unto whom they are answerable.

Besides,

Besides, how favourable is it to machination; to the sowing of the seeds of discord; and to the demolition of that goodly fabric of our happiness, in which is contained all union, affection, concord, and confidence. Institutions, so evidently adverse to the welfare of society, should, if possible, be crushed. It is the duty of every man to lend his assistance to so laudable an undertaking. Breaking the spell of tyrannic custom, is not unhinging the essentials of religion. It is one thing to prune the blushing rose, another to nip it to its root.

Felicity is not to be had without alloy. The lot of man is, however, often to be improved. Our lives are chequered by the hand of fate.

— Yet let reason mitigate our care :

To mourn avails not : man is born to bear.

Such is, alas ! the gods' severe decree :

They, only they, are blest, and only free.

Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,

The source of evil one, and one of good ;

From

From thence the cup of mortal man he fills,
 Blessings to these, and those distributes ill;
 To most he mingles both: the wretch decreed
 To taste the bad unmix'd, is curst indeed:
 Pursu'd by wrongs, by meagre famine driv'n,
 He wanders out-cast both of earth and heav'n.
 The happiest, taste not happiness sincere,
 But find the cordial draught is dash'd with care.

ILIAD, b. xxiv. p. 669.

In the habits of religion, too frequently consist our distresses, as well as our comforts. We have exemplified it in various instances. The wise man, therefore, as it has been well remarked, will endeavour to confine religious authority to its proper bounds; to the use for which it was first instituted, of inspiring benevolence, modesty, and submission in the people; nor suffer the credit of it to grow too strong for that of the state; the authority of the priest for that of the magistrate.

FRAG.

FRAGMENT CXII.

THE chains imposed upon mankind by the church of Rome, were of a nature scarcely to be rent asunder. Never were soul and body so completely shackled. John Wickliffe, towards the middle of the fourteenth century, first began to question the infallibility of her doctrines. But he did not succeed in establishing a formidable opposition to her*: that required a lapse of two centuries more. The year of Christ 1517, ushered in the

* In the time of England's fourth Henry, it was ordained by act of parliament, that the diocesan alone, without the intervention of a synod, might convict of heretical tenets; and unless the convict abjured his opinions, or if after abjuration he relapsed, the sheriff was bound *ex officio*, if required by the bishop, to commit the unhappy victim to the flames.

dawn

dawn of philosophy and emancipation. Luther then pointed out the way to intellectual liberty, and to the efficacy of good works. About the same time Nicholas Copernicus flourished in Germany; to him succeeded Galileo in Italy; then followed Bacon, Des Cartes, Locke, Leibnitz, and, last of all, that refulgent brightness of the Galaxy, the illustrious and immortal Newton.

From the beginning of the sixteenth century, we are to date the introduction of reason and good sense into modern Europe. It was at that æra that true religion and philosophy came to be understood. Till then, the Pope had been omnipotent in the church, and Aristotle in the schools; but even this release would have been ineffectual, had not Koster of Holland, in 1440, been supremely fortunate in discovering the art of printing. This, rapidly improved upon, helped to

disseminate, and keep in circulation, the knowledge which had hitherto been buried from the world. The road was cleared, and every man could travel it, for the vehicles of instruction were multiplying, and entertainment was certain to be met with to the end of the journey.

An elegant writer observes, that Europe will, perhaps, behold ages of a bad taste, but will never again relapse into barbarism, for that the sole invention of printing will hinder that event. The observation is just, for it is certain the general currency and communication of knowledge, has served to exalt the human character more within two and three hundred years past, than all the exertions and wisdom of the ancients.

But I have wandered from my subject. While the supremacy of the Popes was acknowledged, all Europe manifested pas-
five

five obedience and non-resistance; and that not only to himself, but to all that were ordained and employed by him in the ministry. One baneful effect of this was intolerance. Nothing so bloody, we have already remarked, as a persecuting spirit; it smiles and can rejoice at most pitiable distress. Superstition and fanaticism, when blended, form a horrid character; there is nothing they will not undertake; they spurn at feeling; they glory in trampling on the laws of humanity. "I saw," says the benevolent Las Casas, "in America, the Spaniards, my own countrymen, open the wombs of women big with child, that their offspring might perish with them. I have known them bet considerable sums on the cleaving an unhappy Indian down with one blow of a sabre. Infants they have torn from their mothers' arms, and, in sport, have dashed them against the stones. In murdering the

“ principal inhabitants, they have pur-
 “ posely, and lingeringly, consumed them
 “ with a slow fire ; nay, the agonizing
 “ cries of some of those unhappy vic-
 “ tims having one day incommoded an
 “ officer as he was going to rest, he or-
 “ dered them to be strangled ; but one
 “ more wanton and savage in his cruelty
 “ reversed the decree, and recommended
 “ them to be gagged, that so he might
 “ have the pleasure of seeing them perish
 “ at his ease ; and to these, and to an in-
 “ finity of such like cruelties, says that
 “ kind-hearted bishop, I was, to my for-
 “ row, an unwilling witness.”

“ Zealots, no longer self governed, (ob-
 serves the noble author of the Characte-
 ristics) but set adrift on the wide sea of
 passion, can in one and the same spirit of
 devotion exert the opposite passions of love
 and hatred ; unite affectionately, and ab-
 hor furiously ; curse, bless, sing, mourn,
 exult,

exult, tremble, caress, assassinate, inflict, and support martyrdom, with a thousand other the most vehement efforts, of variable and contrary affection; and all this, when even the wildest of them must know that there are, have been, and always must be, a prodigious variety of religions, and that one form of faith can never be the universal belief of mankind."

FRAGMENT CXIII.

“ I MUST be brought to your opinion (says Balbus, in the conference on the nature of the gods) by the force of reason ; for a philosopher should prove to me the religion he would have me embrace ; but I must believe the religion of my ancestors without any proof.” This is the case with all men of sense and tolerating principles. How few have there been in the world who have originally professed a religion from conviction ! We do not chuse or select that form of prayer which we are to use ; it is given to us like fate, to our vernacular tongue. Born in Turkey, a man is a Mohammedan ; born in France, he is a Christian. The country, the town, the very house, often determine

termines the mode by which we are to seek the favour and indulgence of heaven.

Now every one of the sects, with which this world is so profusely sown, fancies its own doctrines the purest. Search into them all, how proud they are of their self-created consequence. I am not as that man is, says a Mohammedan; he knows not the doctrines of the Koran. Alas! poor idolater, replies the Christian, thou wilt incontinently be damned for preferring the tenets of Mohammed, to those of the acknowledged son of God: each thus looks upon the other as dreadfully plunged in error. Salvation is alone confined to the pale of their particular church. A certain man, as the story goes, daily offered up to God this prayer: "Lord! I understand none of these disputes which are continually made concerning thee. I would serve thee according to thy will, but every person

" I consult would have me do so accord-
 " ing to his will. When I would pray
 " to thee, I know not what language I
 " should use; nor do I know in what
 " posture I ought to put myself. One
 " says I ought to pray standing; another
 " that I should sit; and a third requires
 " me to kneel. This is not all: there
 " are those who pretend that I ought to
 " wash myself every morning with cold
 " water: others maintain, that thou wilt
 " regard me with abhorrence, if I do
 " not allow myself to be circumcised.
 " The other day, I happened to eat at a
 " Carravanfary a rabbit: three men who
 " were present made me tremble; they
 " all three maintained, that I had grie-
 " vously offended thee. One, a Turk,
 " because this was an unclean animal;
 " the other, a Jew, because it was strang-
 " led; and the third, an Armenian, be-
 " cause it was not a fish. I appealed to
 " a Bramin, but he said I had committed
 " an

“an abominable action in having killed
 “it, and that God would never forgive
 “me.”

As I have above said, our religious principles are not of our own forming, nor are they implanted in our breasts immediately by heaven. We are turned as sheep are, into certain walks, and then as fashion, which is the shepherd, directs, we feed and pick up nourishment as we go along. The accidents arising from the circumstances of our situation, inevitably compel our assent to certain things. We know not why it should be—We only know it is so. And shall we, who are so entirely the work of chance, think so injuriously of God, as to believe he will punish an act, for which we are in fact not answerable? It is impious and derogatory to the majesty of Heaven to suppose it. Religion being seated in the heart, and the heart being open to God alone,

alone, there he will read us. The externals, the formularies which are appointed to render him adoration, are intrinsically immaterial, as they stand relatively to another life. As matters of state, indeed, and as conducive to the preservation of good government, they are undoubtedly to be revered, and ought to be observed. Conscience may, it will, be regulated, by the particular bias it has received. It does not follow, however, that its feelings should be propagated, so as to endanger the repose of a community.

The fathers of Christianity early began to deviate from the instructions of their Master. In sending forth his apostles, he commanded "that they should
 "take nothing for their journey, saving
 "a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in their purse: but be shod with
 "sandals, and not put on two coats."

Had

Had they attended to this, their humility and moderation might have been ornamental to mankind. But they started inordinately from the paths of gentleness and peace. Riches, power, and dominion, seized on the mind of the priesthood. They panted for the forbidden fruit; and having got it, "the mortal taste brought death into the world," and calamities most grievous.

While we know, that there must always be as many religions almost as there are nations, it is certainly incumbent on us, as it is at the same time the most safe and equitable plan, to allow of universal toleration. Let no man suffer for his religious opinions, whilst he keeps them inoffensively to himself. This is the undoubted way to prevent tumults and disorders in a state. Man can live in fellowship with man, though the articles of his belief be different. As citizens, or as children of
the

the same parent earth, one natural religion is common to us all. The principles of a good mind are intrinsically the same, whether the possessor of them be Jew, Infidel, or Christian. Let the clergy be restrained from lighting the fires of persecution, and the subjects of a country, of whatever persuasion, will live in harmony and peace, and be ambitious of attaining the characters of good and useful citizens.

In dwelling, as I have done in various places, on the subject of toleration, I have been impelled, by the consideration that what has once happened, unless cautiously guarded against, may again happen. Martyrdoms, and religious proscriptions, are now certainly in some sort of disuse in Christendom. But it is not clear to me, that there are not some latent sparks lurking in the breasts of the fanatic and superstitious, which might spread a ruinous conflagration, were opportunity afforded them.

them. The beginning of the sixteenth century witnessed the massacre of fifty thousand Protestants in Ireland. The year 1572 saw the horrible butchery of St. Bartholomew, when Paris alone streamed with the blood of ten thousand of her dearest and most valuable citizens. Your own London, not very lately shook, from a cause which, to say the least, had its rise in an intemperate zeal.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT CXIV.

WERE it not that we have undoubted vouchers of the fact, it would be almost impossible to conceive that there ever could have existed a religious tribunal more sanguinary than the Inquisition. Unhappily there did, and Germany gave the monster birth. It was called the Judgement of Westphalia, or the Vhemic Court. The severity, or rather cruelty, of this court, says the able commentator on Beccaria's benevolent treatise on Crimes and Punishments, went so far, as to punish with death every Saxon who broke his fast during lent. The same law was also established in Franche Compté, in the beginning of the seventeenth century. "A poor gentleman, named Claude Guillon, was be-
 "headed

"headed on the twenty-eighth of July,
 "1629. Being reduced to the utmost
 "poverty, and urged by the most into-
 "lerable hunger, he eat, on a fish day,
 "a morsel of horse-flesh, which had been
 "killed in a neighbouring field. This
 "was his crime. He was found guilty
 "of sacrilege: had he been a rich man,
 "and had spent two hundred crowns in a
 "supper of sea fish, suffering the poor to
 "die of hunger, he would have been con-
 "sidered as a person fulfilling every duty."

The following is a copy of his sentence:

"Having seen all the papers of the pro-
 "cess, and heard the opinions of the
 "doctors learned in the law, we declare
 "the said Claude Guillon to be truly at-
 "tainted, and convicted of having taken
 "away a part of the flesh of a horse,
 "killed in the meadow of that town, of
 "having caused the said flesh to be dressed,
 "and of eating the same on Saturday the
 "thirty-first of March," &c.

The

The same ingenious writer proceeds farther to tell us, that at Bourdeaux a young lady of quality was stoned to death for not having fasted on a Sunday, as was the custom of the Priscillianists. These are dreadful tales. How loudly do they cry, "Woe unto you, ye wicked ones, " for ye lade men with burdens grievous " to be borne, and ye yourselves touch " not the burdens with one of your fin- " gers." Requisite as it is that the multitude should be restrained by the fear of God, and essential as it is that the bars of religion should not be removed, it is yet most shocking to humanity, that Christianity should at any time have admitted of such terrible enormities. Wholesome though religion is, and greatly beneficial as it must undoubtedly be considered, yet when we reflect on the effects it works on minds naturally, perhaps, disinclined to either benevolence or charity, we might par-

pardonably, almost, pronounce it happy for a people to be in utter ignorance, rather than be subject to a persuasion favourable to the intolerance of gloomy superstition.

An hundred thousand wretches are calculated to have been condemned to death for witchcraft by Christian tribunals. How horrible the long account! The celebrated Cardinal Richlieu had an eminent preacher burnt alive on an accusation of magic and enchantment. Even in Scotland, so late as Queen Elizabeth's time, Sir James Melville mentions the execution of several for the same offences. But the learned Bishop Jewel shews the general belief of the power of incantation, in its most unequivocal dress. In a sermon preached before Queen Elizabeth, he says, "It may please your Grace to understand, that this kind of people, I

“ mean witches and forcerers, within these
 “ few years, are marvellously increased
 “ within your Grace’s realm. These eyes
 “ have seen most evident marks of their
 “ wickedness. Your Grace’s subjects pine
 “ away, even unto death; their colour
 “ fadeth; their flesh rotteth; their speech
 “ is benumbed; their senses bereft. The
 “ shoal of these malefactors is great, their
 “ malice intolerable, their examples most
 “ miserable; and I pray God, they never
 “ practise farther than on the subject.”

Never, surely, did any people manifest
 more blind superstition than such Chris-
 tians. The excesses they ran into are
 scarcely to be credited. To deal with the
 devil, was a matter of orthodox and ge-
 neral consent. “ I saw the devil himself,”
 said St. Cyprian; “ I embraced him, I
 “ conversed with him, and was esteemed
 “ one of those who held a principal rank
 “ about

“about him, while I was studying magic.” At the burning of his votaries, this same devil, they will seriously tell you, never failed attendance. His appearance, they represent as uniformly in a black gown, with a black hat on his head, in the attitude of preaching, and with posteriors as cold as ice. I will, however, conclude the subject with the answer I received from a wild and uncivilized chief, whose clans have been lately brought under some sort of government in the East. Having explained to him the general idea of witches, and my desire of knowing if he had any such mischievous animals in his country, he laughed—“Old women
 “witches!” said he; “no, no, we have
 “no such creatures among us. Young
 “ones there are, if you please, and they
 “lead us often astray. The magic of a
 “pretty girl is often too powerful. We
 “really fancy ourselves bewitched by
 T 2 “them.

“ them. It is, however, a pleasing kind
 “ of fascination. We like it, and instead
 “ of punishing them, as you tell me is
 “ the custom in some countries, we kiss
 “ them for their wickedness.”

FRAG-

FRAGMENT CXV.

THE sky has at length become serene ; at least the clouds lour no longer over the favourite soil of England. Your religion tolerant, and your government well poised, they are both established upon rocks of adamant. Freedom dwells among the happy children of the British isles. The laws by which you are ruled, are the laws of justice, tempered by humanity ; their object is, what it should be, the prevention of crimes. They look, when it is possible, with a merciful eye on the offender. Moreover that ordinance which forces open the secrets of the prison, your *habeas corpus* is a blessing not only peculiarly your own, but is such as must challenge the applause and the admiration of the world.

T 3

I am

I am now going to a distant quarter of the earth, and must therefore put an end to this Rhapsody; before I conclude, however, I cannot help hinting to you, that the laws of Christendom are still too severe* — too many are put to death. For one that suffers in China, that prodigiously extensive country, thousands and ten thousands are delivered over to the executioner in Europe. Laws should not be thus oppressive and tyrannical; there is a wholesome limitation which should always be put to severity; neither should torture or barbarous punishments be allowed. To inflict insupportable punishments on a guilty wretch, is justly denominated a base and an infamous spi-

* It is a melancholy truth, that among the variety of actions which men in England are liable daily to commit, no less than an hundred and sixty have been declared, by act of parliament, to be felonies without benefit of clergy; or, in other words, to be worthy of instant death. So dreadful a list, instead of diminishing, increases the number of offenders.

rit

fit of vengeance, unworthy of the laws and of a sovereign. "You forget that "you are men," said Damien, when expiring under the torture, for an attempt to assassinate Louis XV.

Horrible executions are not productive of the consequences expected, the deterring the wicked from the perpetration of crimes; on the contrary, the frequency of them renders them the less formidable to the multitude. The habituating men to such spectacles, serves only to make them indifferent to public punishment. Solemn tribunals, with an awful ceremonial, an equitable scale of punishment proportionate to offences; and an obloquy indelible on all foul transactions, would fix the principle of prevention more radically, than all the dreadful examples which are exhibited. The countries least infested with violaters of the peace of society, are

those where the penal statutes are circum-
spect, but few.

Is the simple robber to meet a like severity of punishment with the incestuous and the murderer? How extravagant are the doctrines of such coercion! If death be indiscriminately appointed for the wretch, who, starving with hunger or with cold, pilfers a meal, or a covering for his nakedness; and for the bloody-handed monster who hath practised on man's life, what have you in reserve for the safety of your persons? Trust me your ordinances are unwisely sanguinary; unless for great and urgent reasons, punishments, if possible, should be mitigated. "It is difficult, indeed," says Seneca, "to find the just balance; but the inequality should be always on the milder side."

Conceal-

Concealment of infamy was, by the statute law of England, (a statute now in general humanely deviated from) made evidence of murder. A woman, in case of accident to an illegitimate child, was declared guilty, inasmuch, as she did not expose her own weakness, and make known to the whole world her unhappy loss of virtue; and to this may be attributed the destruction of infants so common in your country.

It is generally imagined, as Mandeville remarks, that she who can destroy her own child, her own flesh and blood, must have a vast stock of barbarity, and be a savage monster. But this is a mistake; all mothers naturally love their children; but as this is a passion, and most passions center in self-love, so it may be subdued by any superior passion. Common prostitutes hardly ever destroy their children: nay, even those who assist
in

in robberies and murders, are seldom guilty of this crime; not because they are less cruel, or more virtuous, but because they have lost their modesty to a greater degree, and the fear of shame makes no impression on them.

Heart-rending thought, as the betrayed fair one cries, how dreaded art thou, SHAME! Rather than suffer it, what dire expedient is there to which a woman will not have recourse?

e'er number'd with the dead,
 Envenom'd infamy shall blast my name;
 While envious scorn the baleful tale shall spread,
 And feast upon the ruins of my fame:
 Thus cruel will I be.
 For what can purchase female honour flown,
 Or buy the feelings of the spotless maid?

So speaks the wretched Magdalen. In a word, the penal laws of Europe are too severe. Those of England, perhaps, less so than others; though I cannot help wishing, that the statute I have quoted

was

was repealed, or that the fault of fornication should be either less criminal in the woman who yields to, or more criminal in the man who tempts to it: many others it might, perhaps, be well to submit to the like lenient pruning. Clemency is greatly beneficial to a people, and never should be forgotten, when life or death is the alternative. Hitherto, what with legal massacres and religious persecutions, Christendom has appeared a prodigious scaffold covered with dreadful and monstrous executions.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT CXVI.

IS there no spot conigned to real happiness? Surely there is:

But where to find that happiest spot below,
 Who can direct, when all pretend to know?
 The shudd'ring tenant of the frigid zone
 Boldly proclaims that happiest spot his own;
 Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
 And his long nights of revelry and ease:
 The naked negro, panting at the line,
 Boasts of his golden sands, and balmy wine;
 Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
 And thanks his gods for all the good they gave.
 Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam;
 His first, best country, ever is at home.
 And yet, perhaps, if countries we compare,
 And estimate the blessings which they share,
 Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find
 An equal portion dealt to all mankind;
 As different good, by art or nature given
 To different nations, makes their blessings even.

GOLDSMITH.

Thus

Thus the poet, in a very few lines, sums up all that I have been labouring at in the foregoing pages; viz. to illustrate the superintendant care of Providence, and the benign and equal distribution of its favours. But the comparative investigation we have gone through, has not, I trust, been altogether unsatisfactory. A review of past and present times will, at least, furnish us with a curious display of the different customs, manners, and habitudes of even the same people, in different periods of their story.

Writers of much eminence have earnestly contended to prove the influence of climate on the mental faculties. The atmosphere, in their opinion, regulates the genius; and even the soil they suppose genial or adverse to certain species of arts, sciences, literature and legislation. But has not the reverse been demonstratively ascertained? Have we not seen, that there is no country without

without its portion of abilities ; and that in every part of the world, men have been born with the same powers, both corporeal and intellectual ? Intercourse, commerce, and civilization, are indisputably the grand causes of improvement. Those in full bloom, and the people flourish. On the decline, and they recur to the barrenness of their primitive ideas.

What are the Romans now ? what the Greeks ? what the Egyptians ? Are they the philosophers, the statesmen, the warriors, so greatly renowned a few centuries ago ? Alas ! what a change ! Where are thy wise men—thy orators, O Athens ? Where are thy holy seers, O Heliopolis ? Thy senators, consulars, and dictators, O Rome ? Gone—gone !—Not a remnant of them left ! And have ye changed your climates ? Trifling hypothesis ! Torrid, frigid, or temperate, no region possesses the

the powers of exclusive invention, or the brilliancy of superior talents.

The immediate tone of the organic system, the sluggish, rapid, or due circulation of the juices, most certainly affect the operations of the mind. No man can have his intellects in vigorous strength, whose frame is debilitated by pain, or any bodily indisposition. But can we suppose a whole nation valetudinary; or that certain winds, and temperatures of climate, can have the power of diffusing regular and permanent influence on sense? Individuals, indeed, are frequently under the absolute dominion of climate. I believe, said a Christian once, the immortality of the soul six months together; my opinions entirely depend upon the habit of my body. As I have more or less animal spirits, as my digestion is good or bad; as I breathe a finer or a grosser atmosphere; as my food is light or solid, I
am

am a Spinofist, a Socinian, a Catholic, an Atheist, a bigot. The phyfician at my bed-fide, and the priest always finds me at his difpofal.

The country which gave birth to an Aristotle, Plato, and Epicurus, is now doomed to nurture bigotry, fuperftition, and ignorance. Thofe of a Galileo, and a Newton, were lately in a fimilar ftate of degradation; and in the progrefs of time may fink into it again. Such is the inftability of human affairs!

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT CXVII.

THE ancients, as we have already noticed, had names of celebrity to boast of; but their researches were generally speculative. In ethics and moral philosophy they were unrivalled. In poetry and history they soared to the highest pitch of eminence; but as naturalists, metaphysicians, astronomers, navigators, and geographers, they never arrived at any degree of excellence. They were, however, it must be confessed, in every sense of the word, the irradiators of Christendom. Modern Europe culled from the Greek and Latin literature those choice flowers of science, which, by attentive cultivation, have since diffused such beneficial influence throughout the world.

In forming an opinion of the genius, abilities, and writings of particular men, in particular ages, great care must be had that we transport ourselves, as the profound Johnson observes, to their respective times, and examine what were the wants of their contemporaries, and what were their means of supplying them. That which is easy at one time, was difficult at another. Of an opinion no longer doubted, the evidence ceases to be examined. Of an art universally practised, the first teacher is forgotten. Learning once made popular, is no longer learning; it has the appearance of something which we have bestowed upon ourselves, as the dew appears to rise from the field which it refreshes.

Improved as the moderns are, and greatly advanced as they are acknowledged above Greeks, Romans, and Egyptians, they still have a great deal to

accom-

accomplish. Has not their astronomy the longitude to discover? Their mechanism the perpetual motion? Their geometry the squaring of a circle? Their experimental philosophy the panacea, &c. And on some future day, when these knotty points shall be unravelled, if such is to be their fate, shall not the renown of the present times be obscured by the glory of a brighter age?

The sober truth is, much has been explored by man, but much more remains to be discovered. Philosophers daily start up among the acute and subtle children of Christianity. Their harvests are various, for the seeds they sow are dissimilar. All spirit is the fashion one day. All matter the next. Now we are virtuous and kind-hearted from nature. Next we are vicious, and, Yahoo-like, in abomination. In short, we beat about the bush, about it, and about it; but when we shall

be rewarded for our labour, God only knows. You remember the words of the satirist:

See skulking truth to her old cavern fled,
Mountains of casuistry heap'd o'er her head!
Philosophy, that lean'd on heav'n before,
Shrinks to her second cause, and is no more.
Physics of metaphysics begs defence,
And metaphysic calls for aid on sense!
See mystery to mathematics fly,
In vain! they gaze, turn giddy, rave and die.
Religion blushing, veils her sacred fires,
And, unawares, morality expires.

POPE.

It is alledged, that the sentiment of humanity evaporates and grows feeble in embracing all mankind, and that you cannot be moved by the calamities of Tartary and Japan, in the same manner that you are affected by those of European nations. This position, I own I do not entirely acquiesce in. I will admit the ascendancy of that reputable and patriotic principle, which must reign triumphant in the breast of every man for his own country.

country. But I do not see why the inhabitants of the farthest East should not be as well entitled to your kindness and regard, as those who dwell with you in the same hemisphere. To guard against unjust partialities and ill-grounded antipathies, and to maintain that composure of mind which, without impairing its sensibility or order, proceeds in every instance with discernment and penetration, are rightly said to be the marks of a vigorous and cultivated spirit.

Of a general society we are members, at the same time that we are parts of a distinct community. To act with firmness, humanity, and justice, in these relative situations, is the principal calling and occupation of our nature. "We cannot have better talents than those which qualify us to act with men." For that

Manners with fortunes, humours turn with climes,
Tenets with books, and principles with times,

Is

Is most true. No institutions are permanent. We fluctuate as the waters with the varying breeze. Let me here conclude. Your England is now estranged from America. The strong voice of political reason, therefore, urges you to lenity and kindness in your distant, as well as in your home possessions. The preceding comparative remarks have been meant to tend to an elucidation of so important a subject. Hindoos, Mussulmans, Malays, and all the numerous children of that grand division of the East, may be turned to great and to noble account. In exalting them, I have not wished to depreciate the Romans, the Greeks, or the Egyptians. I have only been desirous of shewing, that merits as great exist in present, as in former ages. And that dead-letter speculation is not so commendable, as the benevolent and immediate exertion of abilities and sense.

Your

Your very venerable and candid Lord Clarendon, in regretting certain measures which had occurred during the calamities of the civil war in England, pathetically grounds himself at last, in the hope of the return of his country's primitive temper and integrity, her old good manners, her old good humour, and her old good nature. Those blessed emanations, I wish, likewise, to see radiantly shining round those nations with which you are connected. You are a great people; and possess an extraordinary fund of fine talents, and generous feelings. Let them not, therefore, be thrown away. You can sacrifice domestic comfort, tranquillity and retirement; in a word, the most attractive personal considerations, when the glory of your country is at stake. Banish, then, all little principles. Justice, mercy, and humanity, are the true and solid props of national, as they are of individual, dignity.

T H E E N D.

I N D E X

TO THE

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- Page 22, line 7, before *long*, insert *as*.
— 42, last line, for *Divines*, read *Diviners*.
— 58, line 5, for *superstition*, read *apprehension*.
— 108, — 3, for *single*, read *simple*.
— 131, — 10, for *command*, read *commanded*.
— 171, — 2, for *writing*, read *urging*.
— 198, — 8, for *circumfsion*, read *crucifixion*.
— 214, — 2, for *their*, read *thine*.

FOR RICHARD

VOLUME THE FIRST

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